



THE END OF TIME

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THE END OF TIME

A POEM OF THE FUTURE

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of Richmond, Ky.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

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PROEM.

SCENE : *Heaven.*

ANGELS.

Still winging on our endless flight,
From the great, silent Past we come ;
And age on age hath sunk in night,
Since first we knew Thee, God our Home.
Sweeter, than in those earliest hours,
Each voice attuned Thy praise to sing ;
And mightier every angel wing,
Than when it tried its new-fledged powers.

Ages on ages countless lie
Before our view, and we shall gain
A stronger arm, a keener eye,
A holier love, while Thou shalt reign.
Th' impetuous winds sublimely sweep
Across the pathless waste of Ocean ;
And traverse we without emotion
Our broader sea, our shoreless deep ?

O 't is a vast, unspoken bliss
To struggle up with strong endeavor ;
As cycles close, to feel but this—
That we are nearer Thee than ever ;
To mount to regions all untrod,
Higher and higher yet to press ;
And then with veiled face confess,
That Thou art still the Unknown God.

RAPHAEL.

I saw from out a boundless sea
A fairy island rise,
O'erspread with beauty's mystery,
O'erhung with loveliest skies.

It rose from out the vasty sea
With a sweet and musical sound
Of waters rippling cheerily,
As they girdled the beach around.

Straightway leaped up the smiling hills
With a sudden and playful bound,
And from the heights the gurgling rills
Came forth to bless the ground ;

Came forth to bless the valleys green,
And the forests so bravely clad ;
God looked from heaven upon the scene,
And the Maker's heart was glad.

O might it be my joy again
To trace the flowery glade,
To wander up the leafy glen,
And watch the bright cascade ;

To bend o'er cataracts wild and hoary,
Dashing to earth in spray,
And mountain tops in solemn glory,
So pure and so still alway ;

To see the golden light of even
Stream on the grassy dell,
And think, " O were it not for heaven,
How sweet on earth to dwell ! "

. MICHAEL.

God of all wisdom and power, my fortress, my
shield, and my buckler,
Cover my head in the thick of the fight, in the
fore-front of battle.

Swear I by Thee, O Eternal, that art, and that
wast, and that shalt be.

Swear only Thou by Thy life,—I live, I live, saith
Jehovah.

Forth from its scabbard my good sword leaps,
when I think of the Dragon,
Satan, the chief of Thy foes, the maligner of God
and His angels.

Down in his sulphurous bed, he stirred up the
fires of Evil,
Far underneath the beautiful isle, the isle of the
blue wave.
Upward the flames of hell came bursting through
valley and mountain,—
Bursting and rending their way, and heaping
up chaos on chaos,—
Seething the founts, and the limpid streams, and
the lakes into frenzy ;
So that the waters that fondly embraced the
island, now maddened,
Rushed on the shore, as if to engulf it, and finish
the ruin :
While as the winds that erst had breathed o'er
the valleys so softly,—
Fearing to wake the leaves, and the flowerets out
of their slumber,—
Shuddered, and shrilled, and shrieked o'er the
deep-toned roar of the billows.
Far overhead the heavens grew black, and the
Night was upon us,—
Night on the beautiful island, Night on the sor-
rowing Angels.

GABRIEL.

Lord of all grandeur and glory, so loving, so gra-
cious, so tender,

Down from the loftiest height of Thy heaven there
fell on the island
Light of Thy light, and began its long, long
struggle with darkness ;
Day-spring that, dim at the first, yet ever grew
brighter and brighter.
Stronger and stronger it grew, till it drove out
the horrible blackness.
Hushed was the tempest's roar, and stilled was
the rage of the ocean.
Little by little the grass came forth and the timid
young flowers.
Little by little the forests again clothed valleys
and hill-tops.
Now, though the beautiful isle could nevermore
be what it had been,—
Fearfully scarred as it was, and torn and rent into
gorges,—
Yet by Thy wonderful working the mountains
rose nearer to heaven ;
Deeper the depth of the lakes, and sweeter the
founts and the streamlets ;
Fairer the winsome flowers that blushed on the
dales and the hill-sides,
Hid themselves in the gorges, and peeped from
under the snow-drifts,
Greeting the joy of the sunlight, and bathed in
its roseate splendor.

Solemn and grand was the voice of the winds as
they chanted through pine groves,—
Solemn and grand in its strength, but plaintive
and sad in its weakness,
Moving the hearer to tears by its piteous wail,
and its sighing,—
Wail, that changed to rejoicing, and sighing to
jubilant triumph.
Such was the beautiful island ; we wait to see
what it shall be.

Why, Almighty, does yonder isle, afar on the
ocean
Pour out fire and smoke evermore from infernal
abysses?
Why do the winds yet rave ? Why do the billows
still thunder
Curses upon the blackening shore, aye, curses
forever?
Day is thine, and the Night is thine, the Light
and the Darkness
Both of them publish thy praise, and both of them
tell of thy glory.
Day unto Day utters speech, and Night unto
Night showeth knowledge ;
Day, when the sun goeth forth like a bridegroom
out of his chamber ;

Night with its nebulous heights, and its fathom-
less depths so appalling.
Sweet is Thy goodness, O Lord our God, and fear-
ful Thy justice ;
God, our strength and our song ; O God the joy
of our gladness.

ALL ANGELS.

Thou art our strength and our song, and Thou
art the joy of our gladness.

SOULS UNDER THE ALTAR.

How long, O Lord, how long, Thou true and just,
Thy vengeance lingers, nor fulfils Thy word !
Thy Martyrs' blood still cries from out the dust,
How long, O Lord ?

Slaughtered were we of old in many a land,
By friends betrayed, by enemies abhorred ;
And yet thou holdest back thy vengeful hand :
How long, O Lord ?

Stoned, sawn asunder, slain by fire and sword
Or thrown to lions 'mid th' arena's throng,
O Christ our God, by highest heaven adored,
How long, how long ?

Even now thy children faint beneath the rod ;
Thy help in vain by prayers and tears implored,
And taunting foemen ask, " Where is your God ? "
Arise, O Lord !

CHRIST.

The end hath come and I will judge the world
In righteousness,—the nations by My truth.

ANGELS.

(In a great outburst of joy.)

Hallelujah !
For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT.

We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee,
We glorify thee, we give thanks to thee
For thy great glory.

ANGELS.

Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ ;
Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.

CHURCH TRIUMPHANT.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
And with all the company of heaven,

We laud and magnify thy glorious name,
Evermore praising thee and saying,
Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts,
Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.

Then from the church on earth, yet militant,
Rose into heaven the breathing of a sigh :

“ Come, Lord Jesus ; come quickly.”

CANTO I.

SCENE : *Earth.*

I looked, and lo ! a city great and fair,
With palaces and spires and vaulted domes,
Basked in the sunlight of declining day.
It lay between two rivers. On the west
The larger rolled its placid wave due south.
From the northeast the smaller held its course,
Rapid and tortuous, to the southern point,
Where both united swelled into a bay,
Fit harbor for the navies of a world.
On every side the city was begirt
With walls and casemates, towers and bastions
huge,
Strongest along the northern, landward side,
Yet elsewhere rearing a granitic front
Sheer from the water's edge,—the outline harsh
Softened and varied in the passing streams,
That from their crystal surface gave again
All that o'erhung, so stern and gray with age.
At all th' embrasures heavy cannon lowered ;
Upon the battlements the sentry paced ;
And waving in the gentle summer breeze,

That sighed o'er every loftiest turret there,
Banners were floating forth with this device—
A blazing altar and a bleeding lamb ;
While amid all, conspicuous to the view,
Shone one that bore the image of a cross
In gold upon a snow-white silken ground,
And underneath was written, God is Love.
Why was it that a silence so profound
Rested upon this city ?—That the streets
Of the vast mart re-echoed not the sound
Of human intercourse or industry ?
Not thus without, where, far as eye could reach,
A thousand armed legions were encamped,
On river-sides, on hills, on spreading plains,
Their white tents, like the countless fleecy clouds
Upon the vault of heaven, encompassed earth,—
Only in martial order justly set,
Formed into squares, these bordering on streets,
And thus the whole array ; with plazas broad
Between the different nations, left for sports
Of manly strength or warlike exercise.
Central to each division, high in air,
Rustled its flag, of many-colored hue,
Ensign armorial, and escutcheon quaint,
These too were deftly dight with cruel forms,
Bears, vultures, serpents, dragons, scorpions.
Central to all the host a grand marquee,
Of form unusual, wrought with curious art,
Dome-like above, whence silken curtains green

In circular dependence hung around,
Festooned with golden fringes. Through the top
Shot up a shaft that bore th' imperial flag
Proudly o'er all the legions. On one side
A tawny lion couched upon his prey.
Azure the other where an eagle showed
On outspread pinions mounting tow'rd the sun.
Throughout the vast encampment all was life,
For 't was the hour of martial games and sports.
Here Asia's sons in rich and flowing garb,
And robes of brilliant oriental dyes,
Turbaned and sandaled, like a storm swept by,
On steeds of Araby fleet as the wind,—
Lightly careering, poising now the lance,
Now brandishing their crooked scimitars.
There Europe's hardier infantry advanced,
Charged bayonet, retreated, counter-marched,
Beat back the foe, and won the bloodless field,
In all the act and pomp of mimic war.
Beyond, were crowds of Afric's swarthy race,
In not unseemly, barbarous attire
Of curious texture, woven dexterously,
And intertwined with threads and beads of gold.
These threw the reedy spear, or twanged the
bow,—
Ancestral customs, still in pastime used.
On such a scene the sun with level beams
Shone on earth's latest day,—his parting rays
Flashing along the rows of carabines,

Pikes, lances, bayoneted stands of arms ;
On trappings rich with gold and burnished steel,
Tents by the shore and frigates in the bay.
As a grieved friend departs reluctantly,
And pauses on the threshold ere he goes,
So now the God of day a moment hung
On the horizon's verge, gave one last look
Of sorrow at th' embannered king of beasts,
And king of birds above the hostile camp,
Smiled faintly on the golden cross afar,
And bade the world adieu, and shut light's pearly
gates.

Hark ! from ten thousand cannons' brazen throats
Thunder the vespers rude of stalwart war,
Not like the mellow tones of evening bells,
That tell of hope and faith, of love and heaven,
And lingering, softening into silence, die.
Scarce were the echoes laid, when music rose
From cornets, bugles, cymbals, trumpets, drums,
And stole o'er river, fortress, field, and grove,
Harmoniously breathing life away.
Departed Day, it was thy requiem,
Losing itself in cloister-like recess,
Where the far mountains stretched their colon-
nade,
And the gray-hooded hills like friars stood ;
Or evening song of mother to her child,
Saying to the wearied earth, " Rest, loved one,
rest."

And while the dulcet notes were swelling yet
Toward the empyrèan, in the east
The full moon floated up from out the sea,
Like some fair spirit woke by music's spell.

CANTO II.

SCENE: *The City.*

It was a temple of the living God,
Of venerable air and grand design,
Where met that night a band of warlike men,
And underneath the light of graceful lamps
And chandeliers wide-flaming, bowed in prayer.
The gray-haired Richmond's voice alone was
heard

In supplication o'er the kneeling throng.
Prayer's eloquence was there, the hush of awe,
Love's holy warmth, entreaty's tenderness,
From the deep, sacred fountains of the heart.
And as they rose from lowliest attitude,
'T was with the countenance and look of men
In stern extremity, but not despair.
Now for a space they all in silence sat,
As though in doubt what action to advise.
Ashley at length,—of mild, engaging mien,
And features where benignity reposed,—
Bespake them thus :

“ Fathers and Brethren dear,
Yet most beloved in danger's darkest hour,

Ye see our state,—beset on every side,
Environed and beleaguered by the foe,
Whose squadrons stretch beyond the utmost
sight
Of sentries posted on our highest towers.
Three sorties have been made at dead of night ;
Three desperate attempts to pierce the ranks
Of our dire enemy,—all, all repulsed.
Our shipping is destroyed, and—worst of all—
Hollow-eyed Famine stares us in the face.
It was but yesterday I overheard
A little child beg piteously for bread.
I saw the mother with a burst of grief
Clasp the sweet sufferer to her aching heart.
And this is the beginning of our woe.
The end I hardly dare to look upon,
Even in thought ; the dread reality
Who of us can behold and ask to live ?
Our wives and children wasting day by day,
And perishing with hunger's fearful death !
Sinking with torture lingering and slow,
And, in their latest moments, thrusting forth
Their long and bony fingers as to clutch
Food, which unreached, they die with maniac
scream,
And frenzied stare that pleads in vain for help.
'T is this that leads me to the advice I give,
That on the morrow we capitulate.

As for myself I do not fear to die.
Has e'er my heart in hottest combat failed,
Or cheek turned pale in deadliest assault?
Yet there are those for whom all hearts must feel.
Shall we delay? Then, Famine, do thy work;
And when our strength is gone, perchance the foe,
Gaining an easy entrance o'er the walls,
Will wreak their wrath, long-hoarded, on our
heads.

Can it be wise in us t' exasperate,
Whom we can neither conquer nor resist?
Whose overwhelming numbers are too strong
For all the prowess of our thinning ranks?
Now,—if we open wide the city gates,—
May it not be that woman's feebleness,
And the heart-moving cries of tender babes,
Shall claim escape from them, though not for us?
Who knows but that some feature, word, or tone
Of our beloved ones may serve to wake
A memory in the bosoms of the foe,
Of mother, wife, or daughter far away?
Or tear, or winning smile on childhood's face,
Whisper to them that they too have a home?
Men are not wholly fiends until they pass
Away from earth: There still remain some sparks
Of natural affection in their breasts;
A little light of love, unquenched as yet,
By the dark stream that hurries them to hell.

I offer then myself, to go alone
Or with two others, to the hostile camp,
And bear the city keys at risk of death."

Scarce had he ended when Dubois sprang up,—
In gesture, bearing, look, a soldier all :
"Not such is my advice. If in a word
I should embody all I feel, 't would be
'To arms!' Why do these bloodhounds seek our
lives?

What have we done to rouse their cruel hate?
Why do they thus pursue us unto death?
From country unto country, land to land,
Till now at last within one city's walls
All are contained that fear the name of God.
Do they not know that ev'n the timid deer
That pants and flies before the yelping pack
While it may hope t' escape, will turn at length
And desperately charge its enemy?
We are the hunted; we too are at bay;
And we are warned not to exasperate
These demons lest they slay our wives and babes!
'They may be merciful.' Hear it, ye heavens!
Yes, when the wolf has mercy on the lamb,
That unresisting trembles at his feet,
Yes, when the hawk compassionates the dove,
Or tiger weeps above a dying fawn.
Spare them? It may be; for the food of lust.
But no,—for lust hath not its seat so deep

In human hearts, as the wild thirst for blood.
Sweet is the face of childhood, sweet the smile
That plays on features all unworn by care.
But to these miscreants sweeter were the shriek
Of frantic mothers when they saw their babes
Torn from their arms and brained against the
wall.

God help me ! when such thoughts as these
obtain

Supremacy within me, for the time
I sorely fear that I am none of His.
But to proceed. The enemy surround
Our last fond refuge. Wearied now with arms,
And the rude shock of battle,—well aware
That famine soon our forces must consume,
They give themselves to godless merriment,
To games by day, and revelry by night :
Such the report now brought us by our spies.
Our course of action seems to me most clear,
That at some hour between the noon of night
And break of day, when deepest slumber wraps
The world in wizard mantle, when the noise
Of latest revellers is hushed in sleep,
Then we shall burst in terror on their camp,
With the loud crash of musketry, the roar
Of cannon, blare of trumpets, and the shout
Of legions pouring o'er the gory field.
Perhaps Jehovah, God of Israel,
May send a panic to the inmost heart

Of our fierce adversaries. Sudden fear
May seize them. In the terror and the night,
Each individual struggling for himself,
They may put one another to the sword.
If not, let us at least like soldiers fall,
Fall sword in hand. Let us not die like fools,
Bound hand and foot, and on a gallows hanged.
For such would be the gentle Ashley's lot,
And mine and yours, whoever lead the host.
Thinkest thou, Ashley, that thine honored name,
Valor in field and wisdom in debate,
Are all unknown among yon motley crew?
For thee, for us the halter is designed,
If once we fall into the foemen's hands.
My offer is to follow or to lead
In one last, bold attack upon our foes.
To conquer or to perish, be our aim ;
And may the God of battles aid our arms."

He said. A murmur of applause was heard.
There were, whose hands were laid upon their
swords.
But now the aged Richmond slowly rose :
" Not so, my brother, doth it us behoove
To carry on our war, and so forget
The words of counsel by our Captain given.
Man's wrath works not the righteousness of God.

Vengeance is His alone ; He will repay.
There is a just and lawful sense of wrong ;
An indignation, we may rightly feel ;
But let us keep our anger in due bounds,
Lest the fair breeze, that drives the gallant ship
Along its foamy way, become a storm,
And rend, and wreck, and then engulf our
bark.

We are exhorted ' sword in hand to fall.'
I am content to die, as God appoints ;
And yet if I might choose, I would not spend
Life's closing hour upon a battle-field.
The yells of fiendish rage, the clash of arms,
The shouts of living, groans of dying men,
The fire, the smoke, the blood, would ill prelude
The peace and love and melody of heaven.
No, to die fitly we do not require
Such time or place, such scene or circumstance.
Nay more, there is a greatness of the soul
That doth transcend the power of outward
things,
And is sublime amid the scoff and scorn
And execration of a rabble throng.
So died the sinless One ; and Oh, had we
More of His Spirit, that we too might say
' Father, forgive ! they know not what they
do.'

Placed as we are, our duty manifest
Is to defend our children, wives, and selves.

The law of self-defence is plainly writ
Both in the Scriptures and the heart of man.
From all that we have seen, we cannot hope
That our inveterate foe will spare. No cry
For mercy ever yet has reached his heart.
A night attack is, then, our last resource.
But let us wait until the enemy
Are not so vigilant as seem they now ;
Till they are lost to reason, steeped in wine,
O'erwhelmed with surfeiting and drunkenness.
Then with a desperate valor let us hurl
Our shot and shell upon them, hot and fast.
Meanwhile, what may not Heaven do for us?
A strong persuasion grows upon my mind,
That we behold the latest days of earth.
The end draws nigh, by prophets long foretold.
Of all the prophecies of Holy Writ,
Recorded for the Church's faith and hope,
None else remain unravelled, unfulfilled,
Save what respect the grand catastrophe.
The great red Dragon, stinging scorpions,
Lion-mouthed Leopard rising from the sea,
Monstrous with many heads and many horns ;
Woman, in royal purple well attired,
And decked with gold and pearls and precious
stones ;
Angels with sounding trumpets ; falling stars ;
Whatever type or shadow was portrayed
By those old Masters on the sacred page,—

All, all have found their substance and their
truth

In wars, convulsions, potentates, and powers.

Nations are born and die. The word of God

Liveth for aye,—abideth evermore.

Only one mystery is unresolved,

The final coming of the Son of Man.

Behold He comes in clouds, and every eye

Shall see Him, and all kindreds of the earth

Shall wail when they behold Him in the sky.

Welcome the darkness that enshrouds our state

In deepening gloom. But few more hours shall
be

Struck on Time's sounding bell before we hear

The Midnight Cry, 'Behold, the Bridegroom
comes!'

What if this very night that cry were made?

What if the King of Glory from His throne

Should with the heavenly train so soon appear?"

Scarce was this said, when lo! a sudden light,

Brighter than noonday's sun, shone overhead;

And on their snowy pinions poised aloft,

A band of angels sang:

"Ye sons of men,

Shout, leap for joy, for your redemption's nigh.

Before to-morrow's dawn shall ye behold

The Prince of Glory in the clouds of heaven."

ITHURIEL.

Forth from the regions where day never dieth,
Forth from the verdure that knows not decay,
Swifter than arrow unseen as it flieth,
Swifter than light have we sped on our way.

Forth from the radiance first-born and elysian,
Through the star-spaces we 've held on our
flight,
Now in the splendors that dazzled our vision,
Now in the gloom and the terror of night.

ANGELS.

Yet Thou art with us wherever we rove,
God of all wisdom, all power, all love.

ITHURIEL.

Not unto shepherds their night watches keeping,
Come we to chant o'er Judea's dark plain ;
Not with the tidings of babe sadly weeping,
Or tenderly soothed to his slumbers again.

But of the pomp of a Warrior victorious,
Leading invincible armies, we tell,
Saving the lowly with grace ever glorious,
Grinding to powder the forces of hell.

ANGELS.

Thus it becomes Thee in grandeur to move,
God of all vengeance, all terror, all love.

ITHURIEL.

Bright on His head shines the crown of dominion,
Sparkles His sceptre, and flashes His sword ;
Mighty archangels with wide-spreading pinion
Marshal their forces, and wait on His word.

From trump and falchion lightnings are glancing ;
'Round helm and banner the red fires play,
While at the summons the squadrons advancing
Form into order of battle array.

ANGELS.

God of all majesty, mercy, and power,
Strengthen man's heart in this terrible hour.

This said, they straightway vanished from the
place,
Leaving the men bewildered and in fear,
But Richmond presently stood forth, and thus
Addressed them :

“ Not so soon, beloved ones,
Thought I the end would come. This very
night !

Ah ! who that awful presence can abide ?
Who dauntless stand before the judgment seat ?
Searcher of hearts, O prove and try our thoughts,
Ere yet th' alarum ring its pealing notes,
And now let each to his own dwelling go,
And every soul prepare to meet his God."

Softly and slowly, one by one they went.
The lights all died away, till fretted vault,
Column, and arch were wrapped in dusky folds.
Nought could be seen, except th' unsteady gleam
Of straggling moonbeams dimly peering through
The tall and traceried windows' rich-dyed glass,
Falling on pillar, aisle, and sombre wall,
In varied tints and strange, fantastic forms.
Nought could be heard but the clock's measured
tick

Counting the moments, while Eternity—
As some magician old, gray-bearded, grim,
Bending o'er couch of infant young and fair—
Held finger on the dying pulse of Time.

Richmond approached his home. A pleasant
spot :
The modest mansion, the embowering trees
Waving their branches in the nightly air,
And weaving shadows on the smooth green
sward ;
The vine-wreathed trellis,—all a picture made,

That memory might, ah ! shall forever hold.
He paused an instant at the gate to take
One last look at the dear old place, his home,
Scene of his tranquil joys and sorrows blest.
A rising tear bedimmed his aged eyes,
When on his ear a sweet voice softly stole.

Not upon the mountains only,
Nor on castle turrets high
Streams the precious light of heaven
Through the portals of the sky.

But on lowly vales sequestered
Where the brook flows noiselessly,
And on cottages half-hidden
Underneath the linden tree.

Not to lofty heroes only,
Sages learnèd, men of might,
Monarchs robed in gold and purple,
Comes the true, the heavenly light.

There are hearts that long and meekly
Suffer, to the world unknown ;
Humble ones, the God of glory
Stoops to claim you for His own.

When the sun is clothed in sackcloth,
When yon moon to blood doth turn,

When in final conflagration
All this spacious globe shall burn ;

When above th' august tribunal
Quick and dead Thy face shall see,
Can a feeble, trembling maiden
Hope to be confessed by Thee ?

Yes, for once Thy head reclining
On a mother's bosom lay,
And the tender lips of woman
Kissed Thine infant tears away.

Beamed upon Thee in Thy cradle
Mary's eyes with lustre mild ;
'T was her voice in gentle accents
Whispered : " Sweetly rest, my child ! "

Not the highest heaven's glory
Can that memory remove ;
On Thy cheek those kisses linger,
In Thy heart that mother's love.

She ceased, and Richmond entered hurriedly.
Hearing his hasty step, Evangeline
Came forth and met her father in the hall.
The aged man fell on her neck and wept.
" My daughter, O my daughter ! " thus he spoke,

When he found utterance. "How soon must this
Thy precious faith, as gold, be tried by fire?
How soon shall we and all His followers be
In the celestial mansions with our Lord?
Thy mother too—" But here the tears afresh
Ran down the time-worn furrows of his face;—
"Long lost, beloved wife, but now restored,
No more to weep, no more to faint and die."
"How? what? my father," said Evangeline;
"Whence this unwonted tumult in thy breast?
My mother? Now restored?"

Her father then :

"Evangeline, a band of angels came
This night, and to our wondering ears announced
The coming of the Son of God from heaven."
She fell upon her knees. "Aye, watch and pray,
If ever thou wouldst watch and pray on earth."
He said no more, but left her kneeling there,
With her meek eyes devoutly raised to heaven.

It is a quiet chamber. Here is stored
In long and comely rows the lore of time.
Learning hath often lit her early lamp
Within these walls, where spoils of other days
And distant climes are gathered; knowledge
high,
And eloquence of poetry and prose,
And modern science by whose regal power
Man holds supremacy o'er land and sea.

The page of History unfolded tells
Of vice and virtue, emperors and kings,
Empires and kingdoms, states and common-
wealths ;
Of wise and great, profound and valiant men,
And women mighty in their loveliness ;
Of famines, tumults, pestilences, wars,
Whereby the leaves are blackened and begrimed,
And many stuck together fast with blood ;
While Sibyl whispers her traditions dire,
Or, laying finger on her lips, is dumb.
But chief the works of greatly pious men,
The consecrated learning of the good,
Whose very names are watchwords ; holy thought ;
Manful repulse of treacherous assault
On God's blest word, or on the cross of Christ ;
Copious wisdom fresh from heavenly founts ;
And over all, the Book inspired of God,
The highest stepping-stone by which to reach
The Pure, the True, the Beautiful, the Good—
One rapid glance at these his treasures rich,
Prized above gold or gems. Forgive a sigh,
That all must perish in devouring flames.
“ Farewell ! companions of my earthly days,”—
So thought he in that moment passing fleet ;
“ Guides of my youth, friends of my manhood's
prime ;
Solace in sorrow's hour ; in weakness, strength ;
Honor and ornament of prosperous years.

But ah ! I have no time for such regrets.
Farewell ! O Earth, that gavest birth to me,—
Earth, where the Saviour lived, where Jesus died,
And where He lay, as I had hoped to lie,
In thy fond bosom sheltered from the blast.
Farewell, each sacred, each familiar spot,
Scenes of my toils and conflicts, hopes and fears.
Farewell, ye trees and flowers, ye hills and dales ;
Farewell, day's glory, and the calm of night,
And all that to my being links itself
In ties that can be broken nevermore."

The vine-leaves quiver in the nightly breeze,
Which, passing through them, fans an aged brow ;
And tremblingly the moonbeams enter there.
Draw reverently nigh,—a good man prays.

" Ancient of days ! Most high, most holy Lord !
Lonely wayfarer of eternity !
Of old 'Thou walkedst in Thy Godhood's might
Coming from out the gloom unlimited,
Unknown, unfathomed save by Thee alone ;
Into the future holding now Thy way,
That long eternity which I shall know ;
Spirit unseen whose keenly piercing eye
Scanneth each thought of every human heart,
How can a guilty worm before Thee stand ;
When in Thy sight the heavens are unclean,
And in Thy presence loftiest cherubim

Cry 'Holy, Holy, Holy God of Hosts?'
Can I, a wretched sinner, dare appear
Before Thy bar? Can I confront that gaze,
Which singles me from out the countless throng,
And says 'O why hast thou against Me sinned?'
What could I do, Thou Judge of all the earth!
Ah! whither look, or whither turn to flee!
But that Thy love is deeper than my guilt,
And Thou art He that wept and bled for man.
Grant me, O Christ, to stand so near, that I
May see the face that once was wet with blood,
And mark the print of iron spike and spear
Still visible in hands and feet and side.
So without fear may I approach Thy throne,
And claim to be a sinner saved by grace.

Thou lovest me! Who could this truth believe,
Did not Thy Spirit witness to his heart?
Who comprehend the length and breadth and
height,
Until the light from heaven had dawned thereon
As day upon th' illimitable sea.
Yet with that witness, that supernal ray,
I can, I do unfalteringly repose
On Thy sole promise, wondering at myself.
Whence is this peace? for I could not have
thought
Such calmness possible at this last hour.
For why do not the darkness, thunders, fires,

Tempests, convulsions, cries and groans of men,—
 All which I presently must see and hear,—
 Now daunt my soul as they were wont to do?
 How canst Thou, Lord, so strengthen feeble
 man

To stand without dismay upon the verge
 Of earth that slips from underneath his feet?

O God of matchless power, how wise, how deep
 Thy purposes far-reaching! Who hath known
 Thy will, or who hath been Thy counsellor?
 Or who can tell why Thou hast chosen man
 To worship in the temple of the sky?
 Were these the themes whereon Thy Godhead
 mused,

During th' eternal, uncreative past?
 When thou existedst and nought else beside,
 Nor worshipper was found in all of space,
 Nor Time its giddy cycles had begun.
 Viewing our fallen race, didst Thou design
 A mercy such as none but God could show?
 Saviour of sinners, did Thy pitying heart
 Throb with that love, no other heart could feel?
 Before Thy vision did Thy sorrow rise,
 Thy life of grief, of weariness, of pain,
 Thy mortal agony, Thy death of blood?"

He said thus much, and rose from off his knees,
 To pace the floor in meditation rapt.

“What is that change, O wonder-working God,
That soon shall pass upon my mortal frame?
How shall this weakness be exchanged for
strength,

This mortal put on immortality?
Shall I be young again? And shall these eyes,
Now dim with age, renew their strength and fire?
These hoary hairs resume their youthful hue,
And I walk forth in manhood's early prime?
O Life, that dwellest in the Son of God,
A little while and thou too shalt be mine.
I shall be like Thee, Thou transfigured Christ,—
Be strong to bear the glory Thou shalt bring.

Friends of my childhood, and my riper years,
Who long have slumbered in the silent tomb,
Hear the loud clarion and awake from sleep!
Awake! and put undying vigor on.
Ye that have known corruption's foulest stains,
Rise, and be clad with beauty and with grace.
The hour, by prophets long foretold, is here,
And He shall come, the Beautiful, the Strong.

Can it be true, or is it all a dream,
That I shall be forever with the Lord?
O God, I thank Thee! Let these tears of joy,
And inarticulate sobs express to Thee,
That which lies not within the power of words.
Forever and forever! Glorious thought,

That I, a creature but of yesterday,
Numbering life's fleeting moments by the beat
Of pulse, or day and night's succession swift,
Should revel in the view of endless years,
Draw largely, yet diminish not the store,
Mount, soar, and still the mighty prospect find
Too broad for human or angelic eye,
Thy love too vast for creature heart to hold."

He paused, and, going to his cabinet,
Took out a relic from a secret drawer,
A paper written by a woman's hand,—
The long-lost mother of Evangeline ;—
Then sat him down and read the Vesper Hymn.

" While the shades of night descending
With the light of day are blending,
To the love that knows no ending,
Lord, we turn ; O hear our humble prayer.

Eyes that once were dim with weeping,
Now from highest heaven keeping
O'er the flock a watch unsleeping,
Rest, O rest on us with tender care.

To Thy will our spirits molding,
To Thy heart Thy loved ones folding,
All our helplessness beholding,
Son of God, O hear our humble prayer."

Evangeline now quietly stole in,
And knelt beside her venerable sire,
Clasped her fair palms across his aged knee,
And leaned her sweet young cheek upon her
 hands,
Waiting the trumpet that should wake the dead.

CANTO III.

SCENE: *The Camp.*

What was transacted meanwhile in the camp,
Comes next in order to relate. The sound
Of bugles, cornets, drums, and cymbals ceased ;
And over all the field the kindling fires
First sent up clouds of smoke, then burst in
flames
Curling and blazing 'twixt the rustic logs.
The ruddy, cheerful gleams lit up each group
Surrounding, who, with half-averted face,
Brought meats of different kinds from stall and
fold,
From copse and field ; some borne in single hand,
Others of ponderous weight,—whole beasts im-
paled,—
To turn and roast on monstrous iron spits ;
The sturdy foremen, shouting their commands,
All red, and bustling with important step.
Round the hot centres, or in ranges long,
Ovens were baking bread, of wheat or maize,
Rye, barley, fruit of arto-carpus tree ;
And in huge pots simmered the boiling rice,

The food of half mankind. In the hard earth
Holes had been scooped, and tawny men thereat,
From the far islands of the Southern Sea,
Primeval usage plied, part heating stones
To put in them, part sorting out the leaves
To line the sides and bottoms of the pits,
Wherein swine, fish, or fowl should be bestowed.
Before the tent doors or from wagon trains
The commissaries equal rations dealt
To clamoring men that hurried to and fro.
Hard by the fires, barrels of water dripped,
Which women's hands were dipping out in cups,
And bearing thence, filled caldrons, under which
Twigs crackled sharp, or smouldered ashy coals.
Sergeants along the outer lines relieved
The weary guards, and sentinels detailed ;
Each, as he took his station, marching slow,
With sabre broad and heavy at his side,
And rifled musket with fixed bayonet.
Superior officers strolled arm in arm,
Sauntering by twos and threes along their way,
Marked by their dress and nameless lofty port ;
Or stood conversing with that courtesy
Ever habitual to men of arms.
Now evening's meal was ended, and the time
For mirthful sports and revelries came on.
The mellow notes of flutes and violins
Lured to the dance ; not stately minuets,
But fun and frolic cheered by noisy glee ;

And woman's voice was heard, her step was
seen

Footing it nimbly o'er the smooth-worn ground.
Here in the light fandango, gay and free,
To sound of castanets and tambourines,
Lover and lass disported pantomime.
The one advanced ; the other fled, then stopped,
And, archly looking back, besought pursuit ;
Darted away again, eluded, skimmed
Birdlike the borders of th' applauding ring,
And featly let herself be caught at last,
'Mid smiles and cheers and gifts of showering
coin.

Beyond in graver sort sat turbaned men,
On mats and cushions spread upon the grass ;
In circles ranged, with oriental pipes
Of amber mouthpiece, long and flexile stem,
And self-supporting bowl of curious make,
From which the smoke came bubbling up through
cups

Filled with perfumes from Araby, the Blest,
Rose from their lips and fragrance faint dispensed
Of aromatic gums, in a blue cloud
That seemed by moonlight an enchanter's veil ;
The while they listened to some tale of eld,
Of long-remembered Haroun, viziers, ghouls,
Sultans, and robbers, hunch-backs, genii, dwarfs,
Caverns and neverfailing gems and gold.

Next these, the children of the farther East,—

Lands where the Ind and Ganges pour their
floods,—
Gathered in clusters variously engaged ;
To one of which thus sang a dark-haired girl,
Playing the while upon a silver lute.

I.

Sons of India, list, while I tell you a tale of the
Triad.
Vishnu ages ago lay sleeping under the Ocean,
Up from his bosom there shot a stalk that was
slender and graceful,
And at the top of the stem a lotus unfolded its
glory.

II.

Out of the gorgeous flower sprang Brahma and
stood on the waters,
Looking to North and to South, to East and to
West o'er the broad sea.
No one appearing in sight anywhere, in ecstasy
Brahma
Clapped his hands and shouted for joy, " Yes, I
am the First-born ! "

III.

“ First of all to exist, and maker of all that shall follow,—
All excepting this lotus. But hold ! ” He dived
into the water,
Glided adown the stalk of the flower, as swift as
the whirlwind,
Till he arrived at the bottom, and found the slumbering Vishnu.

IV.

“ Who art thou, knave ? And what dost thou here ? Arouse thee, O sleeper ! ”
Vishnu awoke, and proudly exclaimed he, “ I am the First-born.”
“ Liest thou, knave, in thy throat ; for I was before thee,” said Brahma.
Vishnu leaped to his feet. Then began the first of all battles.

V.

Long time wrestled the twain, till at last the divine Mahá Deva
Rushed in between them to end their strife, and thrust them asunder,
Saying, “ In vain is your contest, for I myself am the First-born.

Nathless will I resign my claim to him who shall
mount up
Through the empyreal heights, and the crown of
my head shall discover ;
Or unto him who shall sound the abyss, and look
on my sandals."

VI.

Brahma then flashed aloft, outstripping the flight
of an eagle ;
Upward and upward he flew, till his pinions were
weary with flying.
Still towered up far above him the head of the
great Mahá Deva,
Then he bethought him of guile, and created the
first of the white cows ;

VII.

Brought her to Deva, and said, " I have seen it ;
this cow is my witness."
" Liars !" exclaimed the angry Deva, " Yes, both
of you liars !
Brahma, to thee no rites be performed, no sacrifice
offered ;
Mouth of kine, be foul evermore, and the cause
of defilement."

VIII.

Then rose Vishnu, and said, "I saw not thy feet,
Mahá Deva."

"True is thy word," quoth Deva, "and thou
Vishnu art the First-born,

First of the Gods ! unto thee shall be rendered the
loftiest honors,

Temples be built, and prayers be addressed
through all generations."

Elsewhere stood serpent-charmers wrapped in
folds

Of venomous reptiles, which the looker-on
Gazed at amazed, and held his breath for fear ;
Sagacious dogs, goats, horses, mountebanks,
Jugglers with cards and mirrors, balls and swords,
In open field or tent, as seemed them best ;
Saloons where liquors in decanters shone ;
These and a thousand other toys and sports
Made up the scene of vain and motley life,
While ever and anon o'er all arose
Music in outburst wild, tumultuous,—
In melancholy cadence died away.

CANTO IV.

Seymour.

There were who relished not this noisy glee ;
Of whom, some sauntered 'neath the spreading
trees

Along the river's margin, just beyond
The range of cannon from the city walls ;
Some rowed in skiffs and yawls with muffled oars,
That nothing might disturb the heavenly calm.
But chief a mimic fleet of lengthened train
Floated adown the stream. Here men of rank,
Brilliant with decorations, orders, stars,
And women fair and graceful, dark and proud.
Hark ! from the foremost boat a voice is heard,
Accompanied by flutes and mandolins.

I.

Maid, whose eyes with liquid beam
Show like pearls from depth of stream,
Look but thus on me forever
Gliding down this placid river,
By its softly wooded shore ;
Grant me this,—I ask no more.

II.

Give me moonlight, beauty's daughter,
On this wide and limpid water ;
Let the melody of song
Echo far and linger long,
Mingling with the splash of oar,
Just as now ; I ask no more.

III.

Bid thy ringlets all astray
With the night-air gently play ;
Take my willing hand in thine,
Tell me that thy heart is mine ;
I desire no greater bliss,
Ask no higher heaven than this.

Now at head-quarters beat the loud tattoo ;
Ten thousand drums took up the rapid roll,
East Indian tom-toms, and harsh Chinese gongs.
At once the lights went out in lesser tents,
And, wearied with the active games of day,
The common soldiers to their cots retired
By little companies. The multitude
Thinned off ; the roar of constant hubbub hushed ;

And only here and there, at intervals,
A casual shout of merriment was heard,
Or yell of drunken men that homeward reeled.
But dissipation was not wholly checked,
For at this hour the grand marquee began
To blaze with lights from newly kindled lamps
Hung in a circle round the central shaft.
Beneath, a table, set in manner like,
Held long and slender bottles filled with wine,
And cups of gold and silver richly chased.
Here sat the highest officers by land
In wassail high with admirals of the sea,
And wine and wit in rival currents flowed.
Seymour appeared the gayest of the gay,
Whose deep-blue eyes, and curling chestnut
hair
Falling upon his shoulders, handsome mouth,
And gallant manners won him woman's love
Where'er he went. Crimson his uniform
Turned up with buff. Before him was a cup
Poised on a column claret-hued and bronzed.
"Ho ! Seymour," cried an entering admiral ;
"Thou 'rt here betimes to-night. Was 't thou I
heard
An hour ago, as floating down the wave
A sentimental ditty caught my ear ?"
"To a chaste maiden, valorous Van Tromp ?"
Seymour replied ; "Ah ! my dear admiral,
What ditties must we sing to such fair prudes !"

VAN TROMP.

I knew it was no other voice than thine.
How now, my friend, what new toy hast thou
there?

SEYMOUR.

Toy? By the gods, it is the rarest bowl
That ever graced our board. 'T is Vinton's
make.

VAN TROMP.

Vinton's?

SEYMOUR.

Aye; "crazy George" they call him now,
Because his wits are addled—so they say.
Who knows if he be more of fool or knave?
He must have had some lucid moments when
This piece was wrought.

VAN TROMP.

Is 't wood or porcelain?

SEYMOUR.

Better than either, sir. It is a skull,
So small, translucent, smooth and finely grained,

Some noble damsel must have owned it once,
And borne it loftily. Look at this train,
Bacchus returning from the vintage, crowned ;
His chariot draped with vines and drawn by
girls.

See that blue sky reflected in the lake,
Those purple grapes, that thyrsus ivy-wreathed,
And girlhood's delicately carmined cheek.
The god of wine,—how exquisite his leer,
His sidelong glance, and half-shut sleepy eyes ;
While from the goblet, reeling in his hand,
Gushes the crimson juice. We almost hear
The creaking wheels, the peasant's vintage song,
And feel the warm rays of the setting sun.

To whom, Van Tromp : “ In truth, it is a gem.
That Vinton is a genius in his way.”

“ The best part is unseen,” Seymour replied,
“ Except by those who from the vessel drink.
The inside—you may see thus much—is lined
With porcelain, on which the brush has put
A form of beauty, earth but seldom sees.

O raven hair ! O eyes of utter Night !
Of blackest Night, that answers back to Night ;
Cheeks that out-vie the tints of snowy heights
Blushing beneath the kisses of the sun.
O figure robed in laces soft and white,
No vestal virgin ever showed more fair !
That background see, of pale and tender green

Deep'ning to olive. From her dainty feet,
Shadows of dusky red that die in browns,
Give but an air of substance to what else
Might seem the misty pageant of a dream,
Ye gods, if I were Jupiter himself,
I 'd part with high Olympus, thunders, throne,
Nectar and all, for such a maid as this.
Now mark ! whoever deepest drains the bowl,
Is blest with fullest view of beauty's queen.
Spirit, whate'er thou art, that mak'st thy home
In sky, in earth, in sea, in lovely woman,—
The Priestess of thine oracle is Wine.
The Paphian Venus rose from out the foam,
That surged in creamy breakers on the isle ;
But this, more sweet, more charming, rises up
Out of the sparkling waves of ruby wine.
Comrades, if I in battle hap to fall,
I charge you put my skull in Vinton's hands."
"One question," said Van Tromp, "may I inquire
Whose skull it was, if thou perchance dost know."
Seymour looked down ; a faint blush overspread
His youthful countenance ; but rallying
He said : "Why dost thou ask, my good Van
Tromp ?
Ah me ! what wicked tales are told on one.
Sad, sad ! I own I 've been a naughty youth.
Hast heard the story of 'The Broken Heart' ?
What, no ? well 't is too long to tell just now ;—
All about love and folly, sin and woe.

Faith, what a mighty sermon I could preach
Upon that text ! A dagger at the last
Let out the blood o'ercharged upon her heart.
Heav'n knows I sorrowed o'er that graceless
thrust ;

But what was to be done ? I did the best
Within my power and wit. The body lies
Embalmed in costliest style by latest art.
The head alone has cost me three months' pay,
And here it is before you. I desired
To keep some relic to assuage my grief.
And then the dagger,—that too I retain.
Its jewelled handle, long and piercing blade,
May serve me yet if I grow tired of life.
To say the truth, she was a charming girl,
And if there were a God, I 'd on my knees
To crave forgiveness. Smile not, for I would.
But who comes now ? Welcome, thou great Bel-
mont,

Wisest in council, bravest in the field ;
And thou, my Walton, second in command.
We had begun to think thou wert as mad
As Vinton, only in a quiet way.
It seems an age since thou hast deigned to join
In harmless merry-making, feast, or rout
Now that thou 'st left 'the doldrums,' as Van
Tromp

Would naughtily, yet nautically say,
Pray tell us why thy face has been so long,
Thy gait so moping, and thy tongue so still ? ”

To whom then Walton : " Seymour, it is true,
I have appeared unhappy, have been sad ;
Intolerable weight of anguish has
Oppressed my mind ; but now all that is gone."

SEYMOUR.

Well said, my Walton ! Welcome thrice, to-
night.

WALTON.

Seymour, I thought it best to come once more,
Though prudence might have urged another
course.

SEYMOUR.

Only once more ? Not once ! A thousand
times.

" No," Walton said ; " I never can return."

SEYMOUR.

Why, that 's a dark enigma ! Thou hast been
One of our boldest, gayest, brightest souls.
But more of this to-morrow ; for, to-night,
I have a vow upon my conscience laid,
A solemn duty, brethren, to perform ;
Namely, to christen this good head within,
Which outwardly has never known the rite :

Christen it not with water, but with wine.

(He fills the skull from a flagon.)

Here, pass the goblets, fill to th' very brim,

And let me do the honors with a toast :

"Perdition to the Christians."

All obeyed,

And willingly the sparkled bumpers tossed,

Save Walton, who with aspect sorrowful

And folded arms, in moody silence sat.

Seymour was touched ; the color mounted high

On cheek and forehead, but he checked his
wrath.

"Cheer up, good Walton, thou art not thy-
self,

Nor hast been, since we bore the flag of truce

Into the city and their chieftains saw.

Of all their leaders there is none to fear

So much as Richmond. He shall surely die

If ever he but fall into our hands.

But then his daughter whom I had designed

All for mine own,—Evangeline, her name,—

A fair-haired, blue-eyed, finely modelled sylph.

Come, Walton, brighten up, she shall be thine,

If that some brutal soldier slay her not.

I will surpass the leader of the Greeks,

And yield Achilles his Briseis dear.

I fear she may be found a little wan,

Unless this siege be shortened in some way."

At this rude onset Walton's face 'gan glow
With crimson, and a soldier's fire lit up
His down-cast eyes, but he spoke not a word.
Belmont, observing this, to Seymour said,
"Thou shouldst not grieve our Walton in this
style,

Who from his recent melancholy seems
Somewhat restored. Pray, choose another theme.
Monteith, what news of public interest
Hast heard since yesternight?"

"Nothing quite new,"

Replied the chief commander's aid-de-camp.

"I hear re-affirmations from the guards
Nearest the city. Stoutly they maintain,
That in the deepest, stillest dead of night
They do behold upon the city walls
Walking, in state gigantic, warders strange,
Chiefly what time the sinking moon in th' west
Casteth her baleful, wizzard light aslant.
Last night one bolder than the rest stole near
Under the cover of projecting rocks,
And says he saw what made his blood run cold.
Hence all the soldiers beg to be released
From sentry duty there. The bravest men
Say they are willing to face flesh and blood
But know not how these spectres to engage,
'Gainst whom no mortal weapon will avail."

Whereat Belmont: "Methought the ghostly
reign

Of anile superstition had gone by.
Either the men are wearied with the siege
And hence their picket duty wish to shirk ;
Or else their drowsy eyes and stupid wits
Fashion them giants, gorgons, monsters grim.
What more, Monteith ? ”

“ They say that sounds are heard,
Stern voices, though they know not what is
said ;

Oft threatening in tone ; sometimes a choir
Chimes forth mid-air like bells far overhead.
Moreover blazing meteors, falling stars
Thick thronging, as when fig-trees shed their
leaves,

Startle the constellations from their rounds.

’T is very curious, we must admit.”

“ Damnable superstition,” said Belmont.

“ My good Monteith, go with the guard to-
night,

And see thyself what shadow there may be,
Or plausible appearance thus to fright
Our soldiers panic-stricken so of late.”

Monteith departed. Silence now ensued.

Then Wilmot, cavalry leader of the left :—

“ Methinks ourselves are not devoid of fear,
That we do sit so silent. Where ’s the harp ?

Ah ! Seymour, here. Tune up its slackened
wires,

And troll us something, be it but a snatch
Of an old ballad.”

Seymour, thus addressed,
Aided by Wilmot brought the harp, and took
Down from its place the key, and stretched the
strings
To the due tension, thrumming gracefully,
Then sang :

“ The black earth drinks,
The water sinks,
The trees revive again ;
The torrents leap
Adown the steep,
To slake the thirsty main.

“ The Sun, too, sips
From ocean cups ;
The moon imbibes her light
With a pretty grace
From his jolly, red face
No wonder she shines so bright.

“ Then blame not me,
If blithe and free
I drink as long as—— ”

He ceased, and said, “ Walton, a pest on thee !
With thy long face thou hast destroyed our sport.
Anacreon palls to-night. Let me recall
A sober song, I wrote but yesterday.
'T is rather dull, and all, who feel inclined,
May go to sleep before they hear me through.”

I.

The sun with brightness all undimmed
Still bounds from sea to sky ;
The moon yet holds with queenly sway
Martial review on high.

II.

And to the ancient harmonies,
In grandeur and in joy,
Unwearied still the veteran stars
With stately tread deploy.

III.

The serried columns of the right
About Polaris wheel ;
Orion leads the central mass
With blade of burnished steel.

IV.

Leftward Magellan and the Cross
Their banners broad display ;
Goodly as in the olden time
This orderly array.

V.

Spring comes with tender grass and flowers;
Summer, in vine-wreathed zone;
Autumn, with fruits and golden grain,
And Winter,—drear and lone.

VI.

Through the dim aisles of ancient woods
With their drooping-pennon treasures,
The choral voices of the Winds
Chant slow cathedral measures.

VII.

They rise to bliss, and echoing clear
Chapel and nave resound;
They sink to woe, and faintly breathe
A sweet yet plaintive sound.

VIII.

Still through the caverns dark and dread,
Still on the rocky shore,
Ocean in changeless majesty
Rolls with unceasing roar.

IX.

Peal yet his thunders, which of old
Man's inmost heart have stirred,
Augustly beautiful, as when
The first rapt listener heard.

X.

What has been is. What is, shall be.
In sky, on earth, in deep,
All things continue as they were
Since the fathers fell asleep.

XI.

Asleep forever ! O'er their graves
To-night the sad winds sigh ;
To-morrow all this festive throng
As low, as still may lie.

XII.

The wildest tempest soon is hushed,
And calmed the stormiest sea ;
But we shall know a longer rest,—
A deeper silence, we.

XIII.

Then round we 'll roll the merry bowl,
And we 'll give dull Care the slip,
While the good red wine is in the vine,
The smile on woman's lip.

CANTO V.

Walton.

The rest, save Walton, all applauded. He
Was silent as before. To whom Belmont :
“ Why, Walton, sitting at our festal board,
Dost thou withhold the tribute of thy praise ? ”

Walton replied : “ Belmont, I frankly own
My want of sympathy with what was sung ;
And more, I hope to meet a better fate
Than to lie down and perish with the brutes.
Hear my belief, companions, soldiers, friends.
There is a God, an immortality,
A hell of hate, a heaven of love and joy.”

At this, astonishment was visible
On every face, and they who nearest sat
Drew back from Walton as in fear or wrath.
“ A God ? A God ? ” re-echoed on all sides.
“ A spy ! ” said one ; “ a traitor in the camp.”
“ No, not a spy,” rejoined Belmont ; “ for see,
His principles he openly avows.
What frenzy, Walton, hath o’ertaken thee,
That thou shouldst utter words so false as
these ? ”

To whom then Walton : " There was once a time
When in my heart I said, ' There is no God ' ;
No God to mark my deeds, or punish sin ;
No bottomless abyss of flaming hell.
So I gave rein to lust,—wallowed in mire
Of scandalous transgression, vice and guilt.
In my career of madness I went forth
To hunt the wild beasts in their fastnesses,
And lay all night upon a mountain's top
With my brave comrades. Kindling first a fire
To girdle us with flame, we fell asleep,
Wearied with toil. It chanced that I awoke
Before the rest, ere morning's light had dawned,
While yet the stars their holy watches kept.
I knew not why it was, but in that hour
They seemed to look upon me pityingly,
From their eternal dwelling-place on high.
' Poor mortal of an hour,' methought they said,
' Tossed to and fro upon a sea of cares
A few short moments, then again to sink
Into the dark, cold gulf of nothingness,
While we in everlasting glory reign.'

I slept no more. A shudder seized my frame,
And quickly climbing up a neighboring crag,
That eastward beetled o'er the plain below,
I sat and gazed around in blank despair,
And madly cursed the day that I was born,—
Cursed father, mother, nature, destiny,
Fate or whate'er to me had being giv'n,

To mock me with a breath or two of life,
The while within my inmost bosom burned
Quenchless desires for everlasting life.
O let me live, O live, forever live,
I cried in deadly bitterness of soul.
No answer came. The oracles were dumb.
Far, far below I heard the roar of pines,
And mountain torrents leaping from the heights;
And loathed the winds and waters that should
live,
And move, and have their being age on age,
After myself had mouldered into dust.
Anon I heard a jaguar's hungry howl
Faint in the distance, and I cried to him,
Thou art my brother ; Fate hath made it thine
To prey upon the lamb, as I on thee,
And then like me to perish from the earth.
I thought, why live in such uncertainty,
Such horrible suspense, when one brave plunge
Over this precipice would end my doubts,
And, if my faith be true, forever still
This aching heart, this ceaseless agony.
God only kept me from that dreadful crime.
Again I looked upon the heavenly orbs.
Could chance, blind chance, or destiny, or nought,
Devise, construct this perfect mechanism ?
Balance suns, comets, planets, satellites,
To sweep so grandly through immensity?
Is there no Author to so great a work ?

Who is it that with radiant bars of light
Bridges the gulfs impassable of space,
And floods with splendor all th' unmeasured
voids ;

So that innumerable rays, that flash
From worlds on worlds, are passing to and fro
Without confusion ? That from every point
Each star within our vision shows distinct ?
What skilful hand has linked with silver wire
Globe unto globe, revolving sphere to sphere,
So that to me, who on this little orb
Away, away am bounding through the deep,
Should come these messages from distant realms,
These telegraphic signals of the sky ?
Who launched this beam, or this vibration sent,
Which myriads of years has held its way
With unimagined speed, and yet but now
Reaches my sight ? Who framed the human eye
With more than human art ? Who made the mind
To read th' impression on the retina ?
The soul to see, to understand, to feel
The weight of glory in a scene like this ?
While thus I mused, a pearly glow of light
Spread like a luminous haze o'er th' eastern sky.
The ebon background of the nightly heavens
Softened to grey ; 't was the transition state.
Day dawned, yet darkness mingled with the
light.
But presently a shaft of living fire

Shot through the lofty chambers of the east ;
Another, and another. Morning's wings !
How beautiful their downy pink and gold !
The sun arose and from the slumb'ring world
Lifted the darkness, as a mother takes
A veil from off a sleeping infant's face ;
And earth awaking oped her eyes and smiled.
The mists came rolling up the mountain slopes,
Huge, phantom-like, till, mounting on the breeze,
They vanished in the upper blue of heaven.
Now all was clear ; the snow-clad peaks appeared,
Ranges on ranges, far as eye could reach.
A band of worshippers mid-heaven they stood,
Choiring their matin song, '*Praise ye the Lord.*'
Westward afar the great Pacific lay.
It was a goodly sight, and kneeling down
I worshipped Him who made both heaven and
earth.

The jaguar's howl was heard no more, but still
The cataracts leaped exultant in their joy,
And I was glad, for in my heart arose
Hope of a being that should never end.
Since then, in all my years of wickedness,
I ever have believed that God exists ;
And I have guarded this belief in Him,
Even as a wanderer in some labyrinth,
Lost in its mazes, guards the one dim light,
On which his only hope of life depends."

He paused. Then Seymour first the silence
broke.

“Believest thou in God, and endless life?
Why art thou here to war 'gainst those who hold
The same absurd delusion with thine own?”

To whom then Walton: “I have done foul
wrong,

Led by a love of danger, thirst for fame,
And all in war that fires our youthful blood.
Methought the Christians were misguided fools,
Of whom it might be well to rid the world.
For 't is one thing to say that God exists;
Another quite, Jehovah to confess,
Three persons in one God, forever one.
Now I avow that I believe in Christ.”

“Then shalt thou die,” cried Seymour with the
rest.

They drew their swords.

“Hold! hold! stay!” said Belmont.

“Not thus, not thus doth reason bid us act.
Let Walton tell us why he holds this view.
It may be nought but frenzy, which, methinks,
Is gaining ground in this good camp of ours.
If so, to Bedlam send him. Do not spill
The blood of a poor, raving lunatic.
Walton, thou mayest answer for thyself.”

He sighed, and thus his narrative resumed:

“It is a matter of astonishment
Unto myself, that I can dare to-night
Uphold the cause of Christ, the crucified,
Whose very name is odious to your ears.
But to begin. With long inaction tired,

And camp-life's weariness and listlessness,
Taking no pleasure in the rabble sports,
That suit the fancy of our soldiery,
And willing recreation to obtain
From any other source, I found one day
A time-worn volume in a neighb'ring tent."'
Then, from his bosom drawing forth a book,
He laid it on the table. Seymour, next,
Taking it up and glancing at the back,
Said, with contemptuous and disdainful smile,
"The Holy Bible!—antiquated stuff,
To hold enslaved so proud a mind as thine.
Whence came this volume? Are there traitors
here?
Spies from the city lurking in our camp?"'
"Not so," said Walton; "it was left behind
By some unknown one on that famous day,
When the chief captains of the Christian host
Came under cover of a flag of truce."
Seymour rejoined: "Away with such a book."
To whom Belmont: "Revile not, thoughtless
man,
This ancient writing. In the days of eld,
When genius wrought within the hearts of men
Grandly and mightily, as yet untaught
To know its own, inherent, inborn powers,
Whoever noblest were in word or deed
Were deemed and deemed themselves inspired of
God.

And this was true. Those wondrous men whose
thoughts,
Endowed with immortality, still live,—
Perennial fountains in an arid waste,
Or voices coming through the nightly gloom,
And bidding us take courage in the fight,—
Seers, whose sayings dark and parables,
Brimful of wisdom, teach each coming age,—
Were not all such inspired,—divinely moved?
And yet it was not by a God afar,
But by the Godhood in them, all unknown,
That they so spake, and wrote, and ruled, and rule.
I care not where the words of power are found,
In Sanscrit Shaster, Bible, or Koran,
Or quaintly and mysteriously carved
On tablet, winged bull, or obelisk;
Nor reck what sky he saw, what soil he trod,
Whether the waters of Tiberias,
Or sacred Nile, or Ganges laved his feet,
In whom the Deity so largely dwelt.”

Then Seymour said: “These are strange
words, indeed,
To come from such a source. Pray tell us now,
Why thou art here, if such be thy belief.”

Belmont replied: “I do not own thy right
To question thus one higher in command.
But natheless I will fittingly respond,
Apart from all in war, that makes appeal
Unto our best and loftiest faculties,

The opportunity for high exploit,
The joy of battle, and the pride of power,
All that has summoned to th' ensanguined field
The bravest, greatest men of every age,—
There yet remains a prime and chiefest cause,
Why in this conflict I should take a part.
But first let Walton finish his account."

Then Walton spake again with serious air :
" Many long years had passed since I had seen
A copy of this book. I took it up
Only to while the weary hours away.
The first line my attention riveted,
' In the beginning God created Heaven
And Earth.' Announcement simple, yet sublime;
Well fitted to commence the word of God,
If ever He has spoken unto man.
But specially this verse came home to me,
As here containing in so brief a space
The answer to my once bewildering doubts.
Nor mine alone. To the great heart of man
In every hour of peril, need, or woe,
An affirmation sober, calm, assured,
That in this universe a God exists,
Of boundless might, sufficient to create
Sun, moon, and stars, and earth whereon we stand,
Is more than welcome. Such a word is sweet,
And unto him that utters it, is turned
The eye of hope; outstretched, the trembling hand.
God is a Person, not a senseless force ;

Has understanding, purpose, choice, and will ;
May care for that which His own hands have made.
The world is not His body ; He, its soul,—
As some have dreamed in late and ancient days ;—
For He existed long before the world,
And out of nought created heaven and earth.
This the first statement. Next in order came
Description of the void and formless earth,
Where darkness, silence, and confusion reigned.
All this our latest science doth confirm,
As highly possible at many times
In the long period that intervened
Between earth's primitive and molten state,
And the formations of succeeding years.
Yet earth is not forsaken ; o'er the waste
The viewless Spirit of the Highest broods,
And by His power the six days' work is done.
The world is fitted up for man's abode,
As a fair palace for a monarch's son.
And when God saw the softly rolling globe
Display in turn each new, each beauteous scene,
Oceans, and islands green, and continents,
Gliding from starlit night to sunny day
Upon the west, or eastward sinking slow
Into the evening shades ; when He beheld
Man in the loveliest spot of all the earth,
In God's own holy, happy image made,
And heard from beast and bird, from rock and
wave,

One universal song of love and praise ;
He bare this witness, ' All is very good.'
 'T was true of all, but chiefly so of man,—
Man, as he plied his healthful daily toil,
Sat on the banks of paradisa! streams,
Or in the cool of evening walked with God.
Such was his primal state ; and such, methought,
It must have been. Indeed, no otherwise
Could man have come from the Creator's hands.
Hitherward, also, old traditions point ;
Like the dim recollections of a prince
Stolen in childhood from his royal home,
Whose faint yet glorious reminiscences
Tell him that he was born of kingly blood.
What else the garden of Hesperides
Than a poetic version of this truth ?
And whence in various languages remote
Accounts so similar of our first state,
If not derived from some great common source ?
That state is lost. The sacred record saith
By voluntary disobedience.
The guilty pair were driven from Paradise,
And cherubim were placed as sentinels,
While that a flaming sword turned every way,
Forever to prevent all entrance there.
Why may not this be true ? Thus much we know,
That perfect happiness and purity
For many an age have not been found on earth.
Nor have they taken flight without a cause.

Eden is lost. Her radiant light still shines
In the far distance, but a bridgeless chasm
Stretches between our yearning hearts and her.
In our lone wanderings we stop, and turn,
And thither bend a long and wistful gaze,
And feel, as far and farther yet we roam,
That we are plunging into darker night.
Hers was the Golden Age. All ages else
Are but base metal. Manhood's hope and faith,
Honor and truth, and woman's trust and love,
With all the winning courtesies of life,
Flower from seeds thence straying on the wind.
We rear our palaces ; art, genius, gold
Conspire the ancient grandeur to restore.
High in the air the graceful domes arise,
And fountains play, and verdure smiles around.
Alas ! in vain ; a random thought of thee,—
Eden, thy pleasant paths, thy goodly vales,
Thy noon of bliss, thine eventide repose,—
Steals on our hearts and wearily we own,
Thy brightness and thy glory are not ours.

But ere the parents of the race were driven
From their first home, to wander through the
earth,
God said to him who tempted them to sin,
' Serpent ! I will put enmity between
Thee and the woman, and between thy seed
And her seed : it shall bruise thy head, and thou
Shalt bruise his heel.'

Here the great Leader speaks,
Captain of all the glorious hosts of Heaven,
Though woman's seed to be, and gives the world
The first conception of the coming Christ.
This was the germ of what should never die ;
A word that lingered an eternity
In the God-heart, awaiting utterance,
But now is spoken, shall be hushed no more.
Like a sweet bell at midnight's darksome hour,
So faint, so far, so fraught with hope and cheer.

The noblest work of God is here announced
In language brief, and yet of meaning full.
It was a promise that should be fulfilled
After the lapse of forty centuries.
Four thousand years should pass before the
flower

In royal beauty on our earth should bloom.
The grand idea of the Saviour-King
Little by little unto men was given,
Each prophet breathed a thought unknown before ;

To the great portrait added some new touch ;
Then left the work to others yet unborn,
Who in their turn resumed th' unfinished task.
From the foundation of the world, of old
The fulness of this scheme was known to God ;
Yet was the mystery from the ages hid,
And slowly to the universe revealed.
Therefore it was that prophets of old time,

As moved by God, successively declared
So much, no more, but what to them was told,
Each adding to the growing store of truth,
Which reached at last, increased from age to age,
The stature of the vast economy.

There was no going back to rectify
Mistakes or errors of whatever kind ;
But all things indicate one stable plan,
Never by man entirely understood,
Until the work was finished by the Lord.
As when some stately edifice is reared
And wrought upon by many a toiling hand,
The general plan and full design unknown
Save to the architect who guides the whole.
So on this noble temple many wrought,
Each building on what had been built before,
And each preparing for what was to come.
In the last days, the fulness of the times ;
The crowning glory of the sacred pile
For the chief Architect himself reserved
Whose power and skill alone the work could
end."

SEYMOUR.

Why was this thought of him, thou callst the
Christ,
Developed slowly through four thousand years ?
Methinks it should have flashed upon the world,
Like a bright meteor in the sky of night.

BELMONT.

The meteor flashes, then in darkness dies ;
Day's splendor dawns but slowly in the east.
A flower springs up, and lives a summer through ;
The yew-tree stands while centuries pass away.
And so with thee, divine Philosophy.
Some son of earth doth plant thee in the soil,
And die, and others, that are later born,
Water and tend, then sleep beneath thy shade.
O ancient yew, thy roots are under ground,
And feed upon the bodies of the dead.
I do not marvel that the Godhood yearns
Through time's long periods toward perfect Man ;
Man the bright mirror of the Deity,
Reflecting back the lineaments of God,
As the clear pool the overhanging sky.

WALTON.

Whatever reasons we might give, the fact
Is that the Christ-idea slowly grew.
Sometimes for centuries it lay quite still,
Seemed almost lifeless, then awoke again,
As in the case of Moses and his code,
Wonderful man whose life in equal part
Was spent in Egypt's porphyry palaces,
In the stern solitude of Midian's wilds,
And in the valley of the Akabah,—
Cradled among the sedges of the Nile,

And dying on the top of Nebo's mount.
A more eventful life, nor History
Has told, nor e'en Romance has dreamed.
A character more noble, more profound,
The finest dramatists have never drawn.
But that which my attention mainly caught
Was this : of his divine economy
The primal promise was the life and soul.
Largely expanded now, it comes to light,
Sad with the agony of bleeding lambs,
Yet joyful in the hope of future heaven.

The overpowering truth pressed on my mind
That such prediction, fifteen hundred years
Before the coming of the promised Christ,
Was utterly beyond the wit of man.
Here a continual prophecy commenced ;
For the High Priest, unceasing, year by year
Entered the place Most Holy, all alone,
Not without blood wherewith he sprinkled all,
To signify that blood of priceless worth,
Which should be poured out for the sins of men ;
Bearing twelve tribes upon his jewelled breast,
And clothed in clean and beautiful attire,
To symbolize the great High Priest from heaven.
The smoke of countless offerings arose,
Fragrant with myrrh and incense, up to God.
For many centuries this sacred pomp,—
The strangest spectacle upon the earth,—
Kept up the hope of an else hopeless world.

Half a millennium sweeps across the stage,
And David comes, sweet lyrist of his race ;
And with his psaltery and tuneful voice
He tells us of a Prince above all Kings,
More beautiful than all the sons of men,
Gracious in speech, his sword upon his thigh,
Riding before his hosts in majesty ;
His throne, the everlasting throne of God,
Himself the God whose throne endures for aye.
Meanwhile the joyful noise of ten-stringed harps
Breaks into wails, the voice is drowned in sobs.

Three centuries again, and now a bard,
Rapt with the visions of the future age,
Sings of the Wonderful, the Counsellor,
The Mighty God, the gentle Prince of Peace,
The everlasting Father, yet a child
Born of a virgin, to dominion born,
Of tender soul to comfort all that mourn,
To bless the meek, to bind the broken heart.
A shout of joy comes thrilling from the lyre ;
Anon, how changed, how plaintive are the
 strains !

His hero hath no form nor comeliness ;
A man of sorrows, and acquaint with grief ;
Oppressed, afflicted, opening not his mouth ;
Bearing the sins of many, smitten, slain.

Two centuries elapse. A statesman-seer
Foretells the death of God's anointed One ;
He is a Prince, yet shall he be cut off ;
The time, a half millennium away.
And, last of all the prophets of old time,
One looks far down the flight of troublous years,
And sees a Ruler, stern and dread, arise,
Whose coming wicked men shall ill abide.
And then the voice of prophecy is hushed
Four centuries ; and when 't is heard again,
It rings from out Judea's wilderness,
And says, Behold ! the promised Christ is come !

Ask ye the reason of this long delay ?
O short-lived man, with God a thousand years
Are as a single day. The pendulum
That swingeth in Eternity's great clock
Beats once a century. The earth whereon
We stand, was made in weary lengths of time,—
Weary to us, but not to God most High.

None of these prophets, if he knew not all
That was to be revealed in distant times,
Could know the meaning of the words he spake
In their full import, nor prepare the way
For words of others that should follow him.
Nor could he learn from those, who went before,
Precisely what addition he should make,
Unless he knew the final unity,
In which all prophecy should culminate.
There must have been some Mind Superior

That guided, governed, and directed all.
For look ! what elements incongruous
Must need be blended in that unity !
The Jews themselves conceived that there must be
Two Christs :—one lowly, one of royal rank ;
One gentle, merciful and sad of mien,
One that should smite his foes with iron rod,
And when his arm had won the victory,
His robes should smell of cassia and of myrrh,
Out of the ivory palaces brought forth,
That he might wed the daughter of a king
Clad in wrought gold and rare embroidery.
And would combined impostors e'er have dared
To introduce so variant accounts ?
Characteristics that seem all at war
One with another ? Is collusion here ?
And would a skilful writer contradict
Not only his confederates, but himself ?

SEYMOUR.

Might not the Galilean fishermen
Have joined together to concoct a fraud ?

WALTON.

Could those unlettered men who spent their youth
In fishing in that lake of Galilee,
Have woven such discordant elements

Into that glorious unity, the Christ ?
They hoped that One should rise to set them free
From the accursed yoke of pagan Rome ;
Ascend the throne where David sat of old,
And bring again the glory of their past.
But when the son of Mary pre-announced
His fearful sufferings and bloody death,
It shocked their souls. They knew not what he
said.

They could not have invented scenes wherein
The Godhead and the Manhood jointly worked,
Each doing what His several nature should ;
The twain in one grand personage conjoined,
But never once commingled or confused.
Just as we see on Ocean's farthest verge
Heaven stoop to Earth, yet Heaven is always
Heaven ;

Earth lift itself to meet the bending sky,
Yet Earth, though glorified, is always Earth.
In this strange history, Eternity
And Time together sit with clasped hands ;
Two sisters they, that look so lovingly
Into each other's eyes, and inmost hearts,
And whisper of the deepest things of God.

Ah ! wondrous Christ, thou wast so strong, so
weak,

Before all worlds, yet born but yesterday,
Doing a work that none but God could do,
Dying a death that none but man could die ;

Hating all sin, yet loving them who sinned ;
With eyes that never sleep, yet slumbering
In thy fond mother's arms, or in a boat
Rocked by the tempest of Gennesaret ;
Highest and lowliest of all that are,
Pure as the snow upon Sorata's heights,
Yet guilty woman, shrinking from all else,
Crept to thy feet and bathed them with her tears.

Could Galilean peasants have gone back
Into the dim traditions of their race,
And gathered up conceptions so apart,
Scattered along through forty centuries,
Shreds variant, discordant, as it seemed,
And woven a transcendent unity,
Wherein the very points which they had deemed,
And all mankind would deem, as well as they,
Irreconcilable and opposite,
Were found to be most indispensable
To the complete perfection of the whole ?
Not one could be omitted from the list,
Howe'er discordant it appeared at first.
Could they have so portrayed this character,
That all the extremes which in His being met,
Were needed for the likeness which they
limned,—
Were needed for the work He came to do ?

But more, th' Ævangelists could not select
Such features from the writings of old time
As they could fashion at their own mere will.
They must take all, each trait, each circumstance,
Each thought, or plainly set in view, or veiled ;
Often not understood until th' event
Threw back a light on what before was dark.

SEYMOUR.

If I could but believe there was a God,
And that He ever stooped to dwell on earth,
Surely this Christ whom you extol was He.

BELMONT.

O shallow thinker ! Is there not a God ?
And does He not from age to age evolve
His hidden pow'rs, His latent energies ?
From germ to plant, to leaf, to flower, to fruit,—
This is the law of His development.
And so, germ, plant, leaf, flower, foretell the
fruit.
Full many a fruit the kindly earth brings forth ;
And many a man hath been indwelt of God.
Such was, mayhap, this Jew of Nazareth,—
Greatest of all, as I have sometimes thought.

SEYMOUR.

I cannot understand thee, noble chief.
But tell me, Walton, something of the Jew,
The Man who trod this wretched world of ours,
And wildly claimed to be Almighty God.
Was he what his disciples said he was?
I mean not God. What was he as a man?
Thou know'st how hero-worship often dreams,
And gilds the idol which it bows before.
Imagination "gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

WALTON.

A just analysis has ever shown
That they who in the drama have excelled,
Or in the general poetic art,
Have always done it by their insight keen
Into the human heart. It is beyond
Man's power to create. That work is God's.
And thus our William Shakspeare was a seer,
Who held that all the world was but a stage,
Where kings and clowns, where knaves and
motley fools
All had their exits and their entrances;
While he looked on, and noted what he saw,
And through the gorgeous robes of kings and
queens,
As well as through the rags of simpering fools,

Beheld the palpitating heart of man.
Then from the garner of his varied lore
Took here and there a trait that served him best,
And of these elements, combined anew,
Made Hamlets, Lears, Othellos, or Macbeths.
The combination was to some extent
The poet's own. Not so the elements.
Now take that book which on the table lies,
One character appears, pre-eminent
Above the rest ; and, I had almost said,
But one appears,—majestic, beautiful,
Now seen more dimly, now more clearly shown.
Fairer than all earth's fairest is the Christ,
Gentler than gentlest, greater than the great.
I asked whence came these gracious lineaments,
Found nowhere else but on this spotless page ?
The separate elements are not of earth ;
Each single tint is borrowed from the sky ;
And 't is no earth-born genius that has wrought
Into one Christ the manifold details.
Now that full thirty centuries have passed,
Since He ascended from Mount Olivet,
And went to sit at God's right hand in heaven,
All men admit He is above us still.
In Him are heights the loftiest cannot reach.
Since His appearance on this stage of ours,
The noblest men are all dissatisfied
With any less ideal. Far too low
Seems anything that is beneath the Christ ;

And when they hope for heaven, they hope to
wake

In His blest likeness after death's short sleep.

This may seem strange, but stranger is the
love,

They bear to Him who died so long ago.

Now I bethink me how Napoleon

Mused on the ruin of his house and throne,

Imprisoned on St. Helena's bare rock,

'Gainst which th' Atlantic's waves with restless
surge,—

Image of his great spirit,—chafed in vain.

(Reads from a ms.)

My clarions long have hushed their cry,

My eagles droop o'er land, o'er sea ;

And on this lonely isle I die,

My France, afar from thee.

On Fame's colossal temple-door

High shall my name engraven be ;

And yet I pine for something more,

Far more, my France, from thee.

Of tender sympathy, a touch ;

A sigh when men shall speak of me,

A thought, a tear,—are these too much,

My France, to ask of thee ?

Too much, alas ! My sceptre flown,
And disenthroned my dynasty,
With sorrow and with pain I own,
France, thou art dead to me.

Spirits that in the past held sway,
My lot with yours must be the same,
To conquer, dazzle for a day,
And leave behind—a name !

One sole exception we confess,
A man from human frailty free ;
A God, for He can be no less,—
Th' Incarnate Mystery.

Him, as the ages onward sweep,
Shall greater multitudes adore ;
And men shall hear His name and weep,
When we are loved no more.

Then was there silence for a moment's space,
Till Seymour : " I am ready to admit,
'T is a sublime conception that of One
Combining in himself the twofold might,
Nature and gracefulness of God and man.
Save in the dreams of man, there is no God ;
But the conception lives, and never dies.
It runneth through the web of poesy,
Like a pure thread of gold through coarser stuff.

6

It archeth o'er us like the firmament,
Which by illusion seemeth spherical.
There is no vault of heaven. 'T is vapor, air ;
Yet thitherward the loftiest mountains rise.
So God is not, yet toward Him aspire
Whoso are greatest or in word, or deed.
Men do great actions in the name of God.
I cannot solve this riddle. 'T is a spell,
A word of mystery, of fear, of hope,
And never on a banner is it writ,
But some are found to gather 'neath its folds."

BELMONT.

A spell? Ah, better say a talisman,
Graved on the universe, which evermore
Whispers to man the Name ineffable.
Few there may be, that have the hearing ear ;
But they are with divinest frenzy filled.
This we name Genius, whether it be shown
In statesmanship, or in the art of war,
Science, philosophy, or poetry.
In the first two, almost all men adore
The revelation of the Infinite
In the two following, some worshippers,—
Perhaps I might say many,—wait and kneel.
But in the last, the vast majority
Say, as they turn away, The poet raves.
And yet the sacred fire goes not out

Upon the mystic altar. Flamens quaint,
In long succession through the centuries,
Stand in the chancel and supply the flame,
Which throws a ruddy and uncertain light
On them who prostrate 'mid the shadows bow.

SEYMOUR.

I lay no claim to comprehend our chief,
Whose words of wisdom gloom upon our minds.
A thousand years ago Napoleon
Uttered some thoughts like those which Walton
gave.

Who could have dreamed that he, that cruel man,
Cruel though great, so longed for human love ?
Here am I, Seymour, in this pleasant war ;
Men smile upon me when they see me pass ;
And women, knowing what I am full well,
Say with sweet voices, " Gayest of the brave
Our Seymour is, and bravest of the gay."
Doth any love me ? Not one soul of man !
And in my hours of sadness I exclaim,
Ah ! woe is me that ever I was born !
What spell has fall'n upon us here to-night,
That we unbosom thus our inmost selves ?
None loveth me to-day on all the earth ;
Yet I remember one that loved me well ;
Who gave me birth, who held me in her arms,
Clung 'round my neck when I set forth from home,

But slumbers now beneath the dewy sod.
Ah ! eyes of blue, when I behold your light
Beaming upon me through the thickening cloud
Of folly, sorrow, passion, and remorse,
I seem to lie once more upon the heights
O'erlooking Como's broadly placid wave,
And see all heaven asleep within its depths.
Yes, if there were a heaven, it would be glassed
In those sweet eyes that ever follow me.
O look not thus upon me, from the past,
Ye haunting eyes, for ye are of the dead.
Close your soft lids, and sink to sleep again,
For ye are but the loveliest of dreams,
And heaven itself a dream within a dream.

BELMONT.

Now speakest thou more nobly than thy wont.
I like thee well, fair youth, with all thy faults.
In this dead heart of mine, if love still lived,
Know that a bounteous share thereof were thine.
With all thy gayety thou hast thine hours
Of sadness. Oh, had I one hour of joy,
One Faust-like moment I should wish prolonged !

SEYMOUR.

Thou art too sad, great chief. If such thy woe,
Thou needst this jewelled poniard more than I.

(*He unsheathes the weapon, and holds it toward*
BELMONT.)

See, on this golden handle, amethysts
Set round with pearls ; and on the topmost one
Largest of all, graven in monograms,
Her name entwined with mine, ah ! woe is me !
For each to each we gave a solemn pledge,
That by this selfsame dagger both would die.
But, best of all, this keen and glittering blade,
Straight as the line that shortest distance spans ;
No crooked scimitar to hack and hew.
Study anatomy, like Castlereagh ;
Find out just where carotid arteries lie,
And having learned thy lesson,—then strike
home !

BELMONT, *smiling*.

Avaunt thee, Satan !

[Faded then the smile

As fades the glory of the twilight sky,
When gold and purple change to steely gray.]
My father died ere I beheld the light ;
My mother when I was a tiny lad.
I just remember how she lay so pale,
When by her couch I stood to see her die.
Scant love had I in all my boyhood's years,
But in my early manhood there was one,
Who loved me truly. She became my wife,

And bore a son, my Ernest. Both are gone.
No winsome eyes look on me from the past ;
But some that hollow are, from cheeks all gaunt,
Look past me with a fixed and frightful stare,
As they were gazing down eternity.
Then blame me not, my Seymour, if I say,
Saddest is wisest, wisest is most sad.

Walton, thou holdest that the Deity
Came down from heaven to dwell upon the earth.
This I admit is true. So Vishnu came,
As is related in the Hindoo books.
So too in classical mythology
Jupiter, Juno, Venus, and the rest.

WALTON.

Yes, I have read of Vishnu's Avatars.
Think how he came, first in the form of fish,
Next tortoise, bear, half-man, half-lion then ;
Such thoughts as these degrade the worshipper.
But He, who came to us from highest heaven,
So spake and acted that in Him was seen
The glory of the only Son of God.
And on what trivial errands Vishnu came !
To conquer giants ! No exalted work
Such as a God might wisely stoop to do.

SEYMOUR.

Just there,—I recollect what Horace says,
A deity should never intervene

Without a knot that man could not untie.
What was the work this Christ came down to
do?

Was 't something greater than our chiefest men
Have dared or done? Was it some better thing
Than kindly human hearts have sought t' achieve?

WALTON.

It was a twofold scheme, that brought the Prince
Of Glory down from highest heaven to earth.
The first had special reference to Time,
And had in view the history of the world.
A personage appeared in Paradise,
Called God at first,—the great Creator's name,—
And then Jehovah God, th' Eternal one.
He gave the promise of the Christ to come ;
Appeared to patriarchs in their humble tents,
To Moses in the desert's burning bush,
Again on Sinai 'mid the fire and smoke,
With lightnings, thunders, and a trumpet's voice
Exceeding loud,—so terrible it was,
The hearers quaked and trembled at the sound.
So dread the sight, that Moses feared and
quaked.

This wondrous Being gave His law to man
Out of the darkness of that blazing mount ;
Then went before the Hebrews on their march,
A cloud by day, a flame of fire by night ;

Glowed in the tabernacle's holiest place,
Glowed in the temple o'er the mercy seat ;
Appeared from time to time to sundry men ;
Made claim to be the God of Israel,
With special favor unto Abraham's seed ;
But more than this,—claimed to be God most
High,

And said that He Himself would be the Christ ;
Yea, that He was the Christ through all these
years,

But after lapse of forty centuries
He would appear on earth in human form,
Born of a Virgin, and would work a change
In the dominion He had held so long.
Its narrow stream should widen to a flood,
The sway enlarge till it embraced the world,
An empire that should last till time should end,
Save just before the end, a little while,
The powers of darkness should rise up afresh,
And make revolt against th' Anointed One.

In fulness of the times, as long foretold,
A Jew arose, of David's royal race,
In Bethlehem born, but reared in Nazareth,
Who said He was the Christ, the Son of God ;
That He had come to execute this plan ;
That He would win all nations to himself ;
That to this end, all power in heaven and earth
Was given Him, a kingdom spiritual,
Co-eval with, above, and over all

The kingdoms of the earth. Such was the height,

To which this lowly Nazarene aspired.

'T was an idea far beyond his age.

Not of this world, that holy kingdom was,

But in the hearts of men. Its glorious aim

Was to restore God's image to the soul,

Rescue a race, regenerate mankind,

Perpetuate among the nations peace

And give to wretched man a life divine,

Which, springing not from out the hidden depths

Of his own nature, comes to him from Heaven,

And shows its power in justice, truth, and love.

Was not this work one worthy of a God ?

After His resurrection from the dead,

The Christ-Man stood upon a mountain-top,

Together with a handful of His friends,

And bade them go and conquer all the earth ;

And, what no other conqueror ever did,

Gave them this pledge and promise of success,

" Lo ! I am with you till the world shall end."

This was sheer madness, or it was divine.

Augustus Cæsar, in whose gorgeous reign

The human Christ was born in Bethlehem,

Never conceived a purpose half so grand.

And was it not effected wondrously ?

Where is the Roman Empire in our day ?

It was a bold prediction on the part

Of Jesus, that His kingdom should endure
When Cæsar's throne had crumbled. Yet 't was
true.

Where are the Antonines? Where Constantine
Who bound two empires with an iron band,
Linking the East to th' West? And where is he,
Great Theodosius, Emperor of the East,
Who with his bristling bulwark of brave men
Guarded the western throne, and stayed the
hordes

Setting upon it from the savage North?
Alaric's teacher in the art of war,
He trained the future conqueror of Rome.
The seven-hilled city, trodden under heel,
Never regained her proud pre-eminence.
And where is Charlemagne, the Frank's stern
king,

Who by his prowess and sagacity
Rose to the throne as Emperor of the West?
Where now his weak successors? Otho, too,
The German who aspired to follow him?
Their names survive; their empires are dis-
solved.

The kingdom of the Christ stood strong through
all,

Stood many centuries, and stronger grew,
And overcame its most inveterate foes;
Drove out all idols and all fetishes,
O'erthrew Confucius, Brahm, Mohammed, Budh,

All hoary systems, all philosophies,
And flourished on the earth a thousand years.

SEYMOUR.

I grant the doctrine of the Nazarene
Of all the superstitions was the best,
That it should triumph o'er idolatry
And hideous serpent-worship, was but right.
But we are in a later time. The torch,
Held by the Jew, has lit the way to truth.
We take the true ; the false we throw away ;
And most of all, reject belief in God.
As soon believe in ghosts, "chimeras dire,"
And goblins which affright the little child.
Yes, in the morning of the human race
A God hung o'er us, as an early mist,
Vague, beautiful, hangs o'er the sleeping world.
The sun shines forth ; the fog is lifted up
From lowly vales, but lingers on the heights
That overlook the river's winding way.
The long, gray fringes, soft and delicate,
Trail o'er the forest's green anear the sky.
But day advances, and the morning mist
Is gone, and all things now are bright and clear.

BELMONT.

What is the mist ? A vapor that we see ;
But vapor always dwells amid the air,

Mostly unseen. Sometimes it gathers dense,
And shows itself on vale or mountain top ;
Anon it floateth as a cloud in heaven.
So this belief in God exists for aye,
Never quite absent from the hearts of men,
Sometimes it seizes on the vulgar mind,
And works a reformation or crusade.
Yet oftener it hovers 'round the heights
Of Socrates, of Plato, or of Christ,—
Or, in some Mystic, hath no touch of earth,
'T were an ill thing to banish from the air
All healthful vapor ; and it were a worse
To drive from this our world belief in God.
Walton, if thou hast more to say, say on.

WALTON.

The second part of this great scheme refers
Unto Eternity, whose dazzling lights
The Gospel like a broad reflector throws
Athwart our pathway in this mortal state ;
Supernal brilliancy of highest Heaven,
Intense, refulgent, brighter than all hope ;
While in its shadow more than man can fear
Of darkness is concentrated. This is Hell,
Whose sombre pall covers and hides from view
More than Earth's utmost anguish and despair.
He, whom you name the Jew, the Nazarene,
Says that He came to rescue wretched man

From ruin darker than a felon's doom, —
More terrible than groans of wounded men,
Or shrieks of women bending o'er the slain ;
A ruin ending not with earth's brief years,
But stretching on and on forevermore.

This is the work that Christ came down to do.
Its grandeur overpowers the mind of man.
It reaches back far, far beyond the time
When man first stood upon the smiling earth ;
Beyond the geologic eras vast,
Whose slow succession dragged their weary
length ;
Beyond what time the worlds came bounding forth,
Fleet-footed coursers of the trackless void,
Or launched like mighty steamers on the deep,
Aglow with inward fires whose billowy smoke
Streamed darkly on their path through boundless
space ;
Beyond what time the first-born Sons of God,
The principalities and powers of heaven,
Flashed forth like lightning into glittering ranks,
With primal splendor startling ancient Night,
And Silence with their first melodious songs ;
Before all things save God Himself alone,
This comprehensive plan lay in His thought,
As the Eternal mused upon His works,
And brooded on the universe to be.
It reaches onward into endless years,
And lifts a countless multitude to heaven,

To endless life, and holiness, and bliss.
The Christ shall gather into one abode
The good of all the ages. There shall be
No sin nor shame in all that happy world ;
No grave shall lift its long and narrow mound,
Nor yawn with sunken and insatiate jaws ;
Nor night be there, nor danger to affright,
Nor tear, nor cry to mar the perfect peace ;
Forebodings none, nor disappointment's blight,
Nor falsehood's smile, nor treachery, nor hate.
There shall be changeless love in all that realm,
Fond hearts that never, never shall grow cold,
Each loving all the rest, all loving each,
And all forever full of holy joy.
So that the Christ shall come again from heaven,
And make His dwelling with the sons of men,
And they shall reign with Him forevermore.

O Heaven, how sweet thy name. On dying men
Thy prospect, lovelier than childhood's dreams,
Dawns like the Day. Thy softened splendors fall
On trees and flowers, on gently rolling streams,
And glorify the faces of the saved.

Was not this work, too, worthy of a God ?

SEYMOUR.

Now, as I live, I would this might be true.
It is a very lovely dream ; no more,—
Else 't would redeem this empty life of ours
From being what it is, a tedious farce.

BELMONT.

No ! not a farce. Better a tragedy
Deep in its plot and various, subtle, fierce.
I long for the denouement, good or ill ;
But that, I judge, is far from this our day.
Walton, there is one failing in thy Christ ;
At the approach of death he shrank and quailed,
Methinks a man in whom the godhood dwelt
So largely, as, thou say'st, it dwelt in him,
Would never falter. Women have been thrown
Into th' arena where the lions roared
Waiting their prey, and not a sigh escaped
The fair young lips. No fear was in their hearts
Of flaming eyes, or claws, or bloody fangs
Of beasts about to tear them limb from limb.

WALTON.

There was no tremor in the heart of Christ
In view of Roman swords, or spikes, or cross ;
But the dread wrath of God because of sin,
That He should bear upon th' accursed tree,
O'erpowered His soul with sorrow unto death.
More bitter was the cup of which He drank,
Than all the bitterness of earthly draughts,
Something we know not—may we never know—
Something mysterious confronted Him,
And His heart trembled, for He was a man.
Take now Prometheus of the Grecian stage,

Chained to a rock by Jupiter's command,
On a projecting crag of Caucasus.
The fervid sun upon him beats by day,
The biting frost congeals his limbs by night.
Unborn the man whose hand shall set him free.
A moan escapes him. "Woe is me," he saith ;
Yet he continues proudly to rebel.
When Mercury, the messenger of Jove,
Threatens a triple vengeance on his head,—
Fierce thunder, wingéd with the lightning's
flames,
Shall rend the rock, with ruin cover him ;
When he at last shall be dragged forth to light,
The ravening eagle shall upon him feed,
Plunging his beak into his tenderest flesh,—
Prometheus disdains the tyrant's threats,
And scorns the utmost vengeance of the god.
Plainly the Poet understands his theme.
Prometheus is a pagan deity,
Companion of the gods, a demigod,
Weaker than Jove, but stronger much than man ;
And far removed above our sympathies.
Just as, 't is said, an ancient Russian Czar
Had his equestrian statue carved of stone,
Horse, rider, pedestal of one huge rock,
A granite boulder, man and base alike,
That awed and chilled but could not win the
heart.
Ah ! it was necessary that the Christ

Should in one Person be both God and Man.
And thus His struggles in Gethsemane,
And His sharp cries while on the bitter cross
Disclosed the weakness of a human heart.
This is a touch beyond the utmost art
Of Galilean peasants.

Look you now

At William Shakspeare how he paints Macbeth.
He hesitates about that deed of blood ;
Advances, halts, his conscience cries, " O stay ! "
Ambition says " Go on ! " he strikes the blow ;
Then, in that hour of darkness and of dread,
He trembles when one knocketh at his door.
But who of all earth's limners could portray
Almighty God and trembling man in one ?
And what impostor could have e'er devised
That scene amid the shades of Olivet,
Or that upon the height of Calvary ?
Or would have dared employ them, if he could ?
They are beyond all human authors' reach.
No ! here we see the hand of God Himself.
Those awful cries ring through the centuries,
And men who hear them beat upon their breasts.
And now, those cries resounding in my ears,
Can I continue in this godless war ?
Belmont, my high commission I resign ;

(He lays a paper on the table.)

I cannot fight against the Christ of God.

Now a dead silence fell upon the group,
And nought was heard except the soughing wind,
And the great banner flapping overhead.
Then Walton raised his eyes to heaven and said :

Sacred breast for me so riven,
Hands and feet all pierced and torn !
Is it Thou, the Lord of Heaven,
On this bloody cross upborne ?

Pale thy cheek, thy forehead gory,
Motionless in death thine eye !
Brightness of the Father's glory,
Hast Thou stooped, for me to die ?

Grace beyond my sins abounding,
Nameless pity, strong and deep !
When I view this scene astounding,
I can only kneel and weep.

While the tears my eyes are blinding,
To Thy feet my lips I press ;
Peace and pardon strangely finding,
Through my Saviour's sore distress.

There was another pause. Then Seymour said :
" Alas ! poor Walton, for thou art but crazed,
To sorrow thus about thy Nazarene,
Who has been dead for thrice ten centuries.
Ah ! woe is me, full many a bitter cry

Comes from the dreadful past ;—will not be
hushed,

But echoes through the chambers of the brain.
Chiefly at midnight when all other sounds
Are stilled. At such an hour one comes to me.
I hear it now ! Silence, accursed wail !

(He starts up, and clutches the jewelled dagger.)

“ Did ye not hear it ? No ? Was ’t but the wind ?

(He sinks back into his chair.)

“ Yes, ’t was the wind. And she is dead,—is
dead ! ”

WALTON.

The dead still live.

SEYMOUR.

Still live ? Oh, craze me not !
Tell me not, Walton, that the dead still live.
Out on thee, madman ! For the dead are dead.
Yet look not thus upon me, eyes so dark,
Out of that pale, pale face, its bloom all gone ;
Or I shall madden and destroy myself.

CANTO VI.

Belmont.

Belmont was deeply moved. He rose and trod
Sternly and silently, as though he mused,
From end to end of th' tent. Then at the door
Stopped for a moment, looking at the sky ;
Stepped forth with face upturned ; came back
and said :

“ A storm is rising ; stretch at once o'erhead
The cover of the tent. Enlarge the trench.
The upper deep is flecked with snowy sails
Of a vast cloud-fleet scudding with the breeze.
Near th' horizon, mounting momentarily
Toward the zenith, crowds on crowds appear
Of black-winged squadrons that infest the air,
And wage on high a nobler strife than ours.
I see the flash of heaven's artillery ;
And hark ! its thunders swell upon the ear,
Sweeter than music o'er the nightly wave.
I would I were the lightning's subtle flame,
Ethereal essence of the godlike fire !
How would I leave afar the haunts of men
To weave about each loftiest mountain-top

A glittering diadem ; to smite the oak,
And hurl it crashing to the trembling ground ;
Or, robed in clouds, to wing my distant flight
To the remotest corners of the main,
Whose waters never have been cleft by keel ;
There, marching on the furious blast by night,
To gleam along the billows far and wide
With a terrific splendor, and send forth
My train of thunders roaring o'er the waste.
Ah ! that were life ; but this our dull routine
Of daily drill in arms, and evening sports,
Is bare existence. O for battle's joy !
Had I but had my way, I should have crushed
This puny, egg-shell city long ago."

WALTON.

Tell me, Belmont, what scheme thy mind has
 formed
In reference to this great universe.

BELMONT.

Hear, Soldiers, one and all.
Whatever is, was from eternity ;
But 't was not in the forms we now behold.
There was a time,—if time it may be called,—
When there was nought save Matter, Space, and
 God.
No worlds were floating in immensity ;

There were no angels, and no souls of men.
Then God was one,—as He is now, in truth ;
Then God was great, as He shall ever be ;
In nature one, of substance uniform ;
Not matter ; call Him Spirit, if you like,
God was not matter ; matter was not God.
A nobler essence, God,—pervading space,
Being, not living ; with capacity
Of boundless life in His vast nature's depths ;
Spirit without or feeling, thought, or will.
And yet enshrining potency of all.
And matter was, through space disseminate,
Its particles immeasurably small,
Immeasurably distant, each from each.
Matter and God alike were uncreate,
And both alike are indestructible.
Now what is God ? Yon star, which I beheld
Shining in highest heaven, a moment since,
Sent me a message many years ago,
Borne by the Æther present everywhere.
This Æther is almighty. It is God ;
And the star whispered to my soul, " God is !"
This is God's substance homogeneous.
'T is this which was, and is, and is to come.
No force resides in matter of itself,
Save power to resist and to repel.
All force attractive dwells in God alone.
He is not force, but force is found in Him,
All power to live, to labor, to create.

In all His works Deity immanent,
Producing all effects phenomenal.
Yet matter is the Godhood's complement.
He could without it have accomplished nought ;
For 't is the stuff of which He weaves His robes.
God acts on matter ; it reacts on Him.
That rising wind which dashes through the trees
That crown the heights above yon river's brim,
Sets them in motion ; branch and twig and leaf
Play on the wind. All music thus is made.
The wind must have its harp of Æolus ;
The harp, its wind ; or all is still and dead.
So, without matter, Æther would have lain
Dormant forever. Brahm would ne'er have waked
Out of his slumber in the ages past.
But matter was from all eternity,
And Æther an eternal waking knew.
By His intrinsic force each particle
Moved tow'rd its fellow through unnumbered
years,
Till all became one whole, formless and void,
Vast beyond thought and yet not infinite.
'T was thus God made the heavens and the
earth,
Ev'n as the Hebrew seer said of old.
And darkness rested on the dread Abyss,
That nestled under God's o'erbrooding wings.
Now atoms smote on atoms, and there came
A tremor in the bosom of the Deep ;

For God said, "Let light be"; and lo! light was.
The thrill was fainter than our lightest thought,
A glow most delicate; yet winged its flight
Throughout th' Abyss and far beyond its bounds,
Widening and widening till the circling waves
Died on the borders of Immensity.
This was the dawn of Day, that now uprose
And won a province in Night's ancient realm.
It lay amid the Night, as lies a pearl
Hid in the tresses of a Hindoo bride.
It was a smile upon the face of God,
The promise of an ecstasy to come.
It was, in truth, the very Son of God,
The Word revealing, and the God revealed.
Or, as the Greeks would say, Minerva sprang,
Goddess of wisdom, from the brain of Jove.
The Godhood, like a slumberous giant, strove
T' arouse Himself. His first grand struggle this,—
This, His first victory; for "Know Thyself,"—
That is the wisest word a Greek e'er spoke.
Toward this the Deity forever strives,
And partially attains it in the Great.
Prophets and Poets all have owned the flame,
Artists and Sages have confessed the power.
But this was later. For the first of days
It was sufficient that the light arose;
That the God-heart with its first pulses throbbed
And felt the joyous, vibratory thrill.
For light was good. Ah me! The light is good!

Then came the second day,—the period
When God said, “ Let there be a firmament
Between the waters, and let it divide
The waters from the waters.” This was done
Not once, but many times. It was the law
Of the whole period. The waters are
Matter existing in a vaporous state :
Matter has two chief forms that strike the sense ;
The solid and the fluid, land and sea ;
The stationary and the movable.
That early age was not so nice as ours
In physical distinctions, and the Sage
Called all things waters in this nascent form,—
Less scientific, more poetical,
More philosophical than modern phrase.
Just as the brightest minds have ever sought
For formulas of comprehensive grasp,
Gaining in compass, range, and breadth of
thought,
More than is lost in accurate detail.
So with the Hebrew.

Now the luminous mist
Obeyed attraction’s and repulsion’s laws,
And thus was formed each island-universe
Of rotatory motion ; globe-like some ;
Others in spiral convolutions whirled,
Fervid and glowing in the mazy dance.
Ages elapsed, the process still went on ;
Each island, first removed immensely far

From all the rest, in systems now divides.
These in their turn revolve about themselves,
And, nicely balanced, 'round a centre wheel.
Take, for example, that in which we dwell.
The mist became a burning-glass in shape,
Revolving on its short diameter.
As the huge volume small and smaller grew,
The inner portions sped more rapidly,
Until a ring was severed from the mass,
Contracting to a globe in lapse of time.
This we call Neptune. Like a sentinel,
Darkly and silently he treads his round.
So with the rest. Planets and asteroids
Were rent by piecemeal from the shrinking mass.
Waters from waters were divided thus.
Now centuries on centuries go by ;
Matter condenses into molten globes,
Hotter than seven-times heated furnaces.
Each planet is a red and threatening star.
In course of time the surfaces grow cold ;
And now a fleecy covering is weaved
With crimson flames that slowly pale to white.
The molten mass next hardens to a sphere.
Part that before had been in liquid state,
Solidifies into an outer crust.
Vapors that float aloft are turned to rains,
And fall in showers on the parchéd ground ;
Yet some are subtler and remain on high.
Thus in its order comes the brave expanse,

And heaven first spreads its dome above the earth
The third day comes, and, cooling down yet more,
The crust is cracked and wrinkles in ravines,
Into whose depths the waters pour themselves,
Dry land appears, but most in mountain-heights.
The circumambient waves are called the Seas.
Ocean is born, and from its glassy front
Reflected gleam volcanic, dreadful flames ;
And hissing on its way this bomb-shell earth
Spins as it flies.

Thus were the planets made.
Such was the Godhood's first cyclopean life,—
Blind, powerful, titanic. Now behold
A higher life, a new development.

WALTON.

Canst thou unfold the mystery of life ?

BELMONT.

I can at least disclose my final thought.
All life is motion ; not all motion, life.
It is not life to whirl as planets do
About their suns. Not light itself is life,
Though 't is the garment of th' Invisible.
The lowest form of life was in the plant,
Some type of Algæ,—call it Photophyte,—
That grew upon the margin of the Sea.
But know full well that matter never lives.

Matter may move, is moved ; but life is God's.
Matter was forced to take some complex form
By a blind instinct of the deity,
By fate, or, if you like, by accident ;
For intellect and choice were not as yet.
The organism on the Æther then
Reacted and the Æther thrilled with life,
As on the first day it had thrilled with light.
First light, then life, the nobler of the twain.
Thus the harsh winds, that howl about our tent,
Smite on the camp, are smitten back in turn,
And vent their spleen in discord loud and hoarse.
But let Zephyrus breathe on Seymour's harp,
And it evokes the Soul of harmony.
Mayhap at first a single string responds,
Yet presently another adds its note,
Touched by the fingers of the breeze unseen,
Till many-chorded music greets the ear.
So life began upon this lifeless orb.
" Let the earth bring forth grass, herbs yielding
seed,
After its kind the fruit-tree bear its fruit.
And it was so." Now trunk, and stem, and leaf,
Flower and fruit, come dancing from the earth.
For Flora, maid of beauty, waves her wand,
Like an enchantress, o'er the island peaks,
And the rich valleys swelling from the deep.
Was it not so ? Do not the igneous rocks
Still show the traces of the world of plants,

Life's first born in their granite sepulchre ?
The fourth day now, in which the satellites,—
Moons to the planets,—take their shape and place.
Planets were fashioned in the previous age.
The central masses gather up their strength
Into resplendent suns. These viewed from far
Are stars that grace the firmament of heaven.
These are for lights, signs, seasons, days, and
years.

The fifth day brings a higher grade of life,—
The animal, the seat of thought and will,
Being that tastes of pleasure and of pain.
The Protozoa in the waters move,
In numbers countless,—most abundantly.
The Godhood first displays intelligence,
Now first exhibits consciousness and choice.
This life, I know not whether 't was evolved
Out of that previous, lower one of plants,
Or freshly rose as that had risen before.
Certes the deity now struggles up
From low beginnings to a higher plane,
And higher yet as ages wing their flight.
Matter reluctates, but the work goes on ;
The Godhood yearns for ever nobler forms,
Though sometimes baffled in its upward course,
As mightiest rivers have their eddies too,
And yet their currents broader, deeper grow.
Organs unfinished in the earlier tribes
Are prophecies of things which are to come.

8

Now fishes cleave the cool refreshing seas,
And the birds mount and carol in the air.
Nature is vocal. In preceding days
Winds through the forests moaned, and restless
waves

Dashed on the beach in melancholy wail.
But now the eagle screams above the main,
Thrushes and linnets pipe amid the groves,
And the fond turtle to the list'ning vale
Breathes the soft notes of tenderness and love.
Sentient existence, conscious, blissful life,—
Such is the fifth day's gift. The sixth day
hears

The roar of beasts, the lowing of the herds.
But one step more and then the goal is reached.
O Image of th' Almighty, glorious Man !
Highest development of Deity ;
Born to dominion, nobler than the brutes ;
Able to count the worlds, to weigh the stars ;
And what is greater far, to know Thyself,
And thus know God, for God is one with Thee.
The hour of thy nativity is come ;
It rings upon Eternity's great bell.
Walk forth on earth, and as thou viewest all,
Flora and Fauna, vales and solemn woods,
And snow-clad peaks, and broadly rolling seas,
Day's glory, and the quiet heaven of Night,—
Say, as thou only canst, that all is good.
Thy history is God's. He finds in thee

Self-consciousness. Thy strength and grace are
His.

In thee the deity's long striving ends ;
Thou livest, movest, being hast in Him.
And thou, O Spirit of the universe,
This, this is life, to know, to feel thy power
Thrilling our heart-strings into ecstasy.
In thee we claim a kindred with the stars,
With the great mountains, deserts, torrents,
floods ;
And as we see the light of myriad worlds
Soft glowing through the ethereal regions vast,
We kneel to this Shekinah and adore.

WALTON.

Art thou, then, God ?

BELMONT.

I am a part, but not the whole of God.
He is the substance that pervadeth all
The personalities that dwell on earth.
I am a part of matter, not the whole ;
My nervous system finer than the clod,
My brain more exquisite than that of brutes ;
And thus I know I am a part of God.
The seventh day is not yet, but it shall come ;
That day of rest, when Brahm shall sleep again,
And souls returning unto God, who gave,

Shall find in him their coveted repose.
Evening and morning were the first of days ;
Evening and morn, the second, and the rest,—
Or Night and Day, as we should term them now.
Night brightens into Day ; Day sinks to Night.
Such is the law of things. The human frame,
With the day's labor wearied, falls asleep.
Earth has her winter, and man's dozing age
Slumbers in death. So with society.
Nations are subject to the general law,—
Are born, grow, flourish, then decay and die,
If we speak truth it is not death, but sleep.
Why then should Brahm not sleep ? The Hindoo
Sage
Felt and expressed the strong necessity,
The yearning for repose in Nature's heart,
When he taught Man each kalpa's rise and end.
Like a sweet floweret that folds in its leaves
At night's approach,—so shall this mighty frame
Reverse the process of its forming age.
In all things are the elements of death.
Earth's moon is dead ; its plains are deserts bare ;
Its mountains girdle horrid chasms and gulfs,
Scorched with the fires that died out long ago.
No sprig of grass is there ; no drop of dew,
No sign of life midst universal death.
And earth has passed her days of hey-day youth,
Rollicking springtime, rich in bud and bloom.
'Tis glorious summer now, when fruits and grains

Smile o'er the fertile vales. The little hills
Clap their glad hands, and shout aloud their joy.
But Winter couches low at either pole,
And sternly, coldly, surely bides his time.
All worlds by imperceptible degrees
Shall lose the morning swiftness of their course,
And in one mouldering ruin disappear.
Just as man's body, wasting in the tomb,
Into its elements at last resolves ;
So with God's body, this fair universe.
Life, motion, separate being all shall cease,
Light, earliest born, the last to close her eyes ;
And then shall ancient Night resume her reign,
And quell this rebel province to her sway,
Ocean of Darkness, thou no pity hast ;
Forever dashing madly on the beach,
Where the far *nebulæ* defend the coast ;
Thou seekest to o'erwhelm this upstart isle,
And thou shalt gain thine end, Most Terrible !

Thus dies the universe. Thou canst not die,
Thou, who of old the earth's foundation laidst ;
Whose hands have wrought the heavens with all
their hosts.
Perish all else, yet thou shalt still endure.
They shall wax old, and as a garment thou
Shalt change them, and thy vesture shall be
changed,
Thou art the same. Thy years shall have no end,

WALTON.

And shall the universe awake no more
From this dread death which thou hast named a
sleep?

BELMONT.

Saith not the Seer, "Thy vesture thou shalt
change?"

The Æther's power is infinite, because
The Æther's self extends without a bound,
And stretches through th' infinitudes of space.
It cannot act where it is not itself.
Hence as this spacious universe contracts,
The Æther's power diminishes therewith.
Matter repels,—resists the Æther's force;
As this grows weak, the other stronger grows;
And so at last an equipoise is reached,—
An equilibrium, and that is Death.
The Æther uses matter as a means
Of acting on Itself. Force never dies.
Countless vibrations have but sped abroad
To heap up Force in regions far away.
Ere it reflows, the stubborn energy
Of matter drives the atoms all apart.
Each particle with endless being fraught
Survives the wreck. This is the law of laws,
And underlies all others. Next to this,
Is the great law of change. Man wakes from
sleep,

And to the toil of daily life returns.
Earth wakes from winter, and spring's kindly
 warmth
Mantles her form in beauty and in bloom.
This is the law of change : From death to life,
From life to death again forevermore,
As Ocean ebbs and flows, and flows and ebbs.
So Brahma, Vishnu, Siva have their rôles,
And thus they run : Create, Sustain, Destroy ;
Or we may say, Uplift, Uphold, Cast down.
And Brahma placed our earth in Vishnu's arms,
A smiling babe, now grown to womanhood,
A dream of beauty. Vishnu falls asleep,
And Siva comes and strangles her to death.
Then Siva slumbers, and the mystic Three
All sleep in Brahm, for He is all in all.
Ages on ages pass, and Brahm awakes,
And re-creates the Triad, and again
The word is given, Create, Sustain, Destroy.

CANTO VII.

Symposium.

He said and paused, apparently absorbed
In his own thoughts. Then Walton : " Dost accept
The first leaf of the Book inspired of God ?
What credence givest thou to all the rest ? "
To whom Belmont : " I hold, much truth is found
In all religions,—much too that is false.
To Moses and the Prophets praise is due,
And the first chapter of the Book makes clear
That the great Hebrew spake as moved of God ; or
That is, in him the Godhood largely dwelt,
More than in other men of that his day.
And otherwise we strive in vain to show
The source of his deep wisdom. Yet I think
That even here his views too narrow were,
Nor understood he fully what he wrote.
Ever the sayings of the Wise are dark,
Though clearer to themselves than to the herd.
The universal Spirit muses long
Before it understands its own high thoughts.
'T is so in every science ;—most in this
Which seeks the knowledge of his inmost self ;

And many centuries had passed away
Before a true interpreter arose,
Those words of purest wisdom to expound."

WALTON.

Thou speakest of a spirit ; yet 't is plain
Thy God is but a subtle form of matter.

BELMONT.

The Æther is not matter, for it has
No weight ; does not retard the comet's flight,
Whose gauzy veil dims not the faintest star.
What men style spirit, seems to me but nought ;
Ev'n less than empty space, if such might be ;
A mere vacuity that cannot have
Length, breadth or height, or qualities or powers,
But is the merest shadow of a name.
Æther exists, 't is here, 't is everywhere ;
In its totality has boundless strength ;
Has been of old, from all th' eternal years ;
Knows not decay, can never cease to be.
I ask, of what can these be true save God ?
All life is God's ; all thought, all will are His ;
All love, all hate, all sorrow, and all joy.
Nought else can think, or will, or love, or hate.
Crass matter surely can do none of these.
Then what is left us but that wondrous Presence

Which doth inhabit this broad universe,
But which the heaven of heavens cannot contain ?
This mighty fabric is engulfed in God,
Who is around, above, beneath it all ;
And be it still, or sweepeth it along
Age after age straight forward on its course,
Yet is it ever midway of the Deep,
As Time is midway of Eternity,
While in at every window looks the Night.

Would I were all of God, as I am part ;
For then through boundless space would I enjoy
The long Nirvana of the Buddhist creed,
And, stamping out this hostile universe,
Would wrap myself in darkness as a robe.

WALTON.

This Æther which thou claimest as thy God,
Is only Matter, thin and tenuous ;
For 't is elastic, and it answers back
To thrills of light-producing molecules,
Or bounding pulse of human nerves or brains,
As air responds to quivering strings of harps.

BELMONT.

Then call it Matter, Walton, if thou wilt.
Names do not terrify me as of yore.
A thrill of nerve begets a thrill of soul ;

How could this be, if they were not alike ?
The chasm betwixt the brain and what is called
Spirit, has ne'er been bridged, can never be.
How does that ghostly Nothing apprehend
The motions of the substance that we are ?
Take cognizance by eye, or ear, or hand ?

WALTON.

I cannot tell. This is a depth profound ;
And yet I know that something in me thinks,
And feels, and wills. Matter does none of these.
Canst thou in millimetres measure love ?
Count the vibrations of a trembling hope ?
Or graphically represent a fear ?
My hand, my eye, my ear are not myself,—
The mystery denominated I.
Rend them away from me ; I still remain.
Have Æther's particles free will or choice ?
Can they be one, as I myself am one ?
Is each of them an individual soul ?
Or does a cluster make one conscious self ?
Do countless tiny atoms, all apart,
Gyrate in curves or spirals intricate,
And is this whirling motion thought or will,
Noble self-sacrifice or tender trust ?
A movement to the right,—can that be joy ?
A left-ward progress, terror or despair ?
Surely, Belmont, thou canst not thus believe !

BELMONT.

The wine in yonder crystal cup hath caught
Its color from the sun, and flasheth forth
From out its heart a beauteous ruby red :
And this upon the retina doth beat,
Making vibrations many million-fold
In one brief second's space. Thus much we
know.

But is this all? No ; something stands behind
In the brain's deep recesses that can see.
I hold it is the Æther, which thou know'st
Is there. Why fly to something that is Nought?

WALTON.

Belmont, our spirits are most real things.
Infinite ages ere there was a world,
Spirit existed. Out of nothingness
It summoned matter by creative act,
And holds it up in being to this hour.
And though this mighty universe should sink
Back to the nothingness from which it came,
Spirit would live, and live forevermore.
That first of spirits is th' eternal God,
And we are like Him, though of less degree.
We think, we feel, we will, we love, we hate ;
All these we do, and yet we know not how.
We too are tied to matter, like the Christ,

Who stooped to earth to share our lowly state,
And bore to heaven a body like our own.
How can this be? I own I cannot tell,
Nor all the mysteries of life explore.
But still thy theory, though 't is akin
To ancient Grecian thought, rests on the sand.
From star to star thy Æther may extend,
Or ev'n beyond ; but is it infinite?
This were a mere assumption, wanting proof.

Then as to us poor trembling sons of men,
If what thou hold'st be true, death ends us all,
And none of us hath life beyond the grave.

BELMONT.

(With a troubled look and sighing deeply.)

Sooner or later Seymour's tuneful harp,
Its strings all snapped, shall crumble into dust
The winds that wont to wake its melodies,
Shall seek for it in vain through tent or hall,
Shouting, "Where art thou, friend of joyous
hours?"—

Anon to whisper softly, "Art thou dead?"

Man dies. His nerves and brain disintegrate,
And the fond Æther stirs him not again.
Dust unto dust perpetually returns,
And these proud bodies shall again be clay.
Why not? We momentarily are giving back
Unto the world of Plants the elements

Which it had lent to us. 'Thus keep we up
The never-ending commerce of the realms.
We die ;—our bodies turn again to dust ;
'That is in part,—for gases first exhale,
Float in the air and nourish trees and flowers.
Perchance the warrior's sinews re-appear
In the tough branches of the sturdy oak ;
While the young maiden's bloom adorns the rose,
And her fair forehead in the lily shines.

All vegetation feeds thereon ; the moss,
Lowliest of all,—cedars of Lebanon,
And giant pines of California,
With mountain firs and ash. By these again
The animals are fed, save such as prey
On others. 'That removes it but a step.
Thus from the rhizopod to th' elephant,
And from the dewdrop's viewless denizens
Up to the lord of seas, leviathan,
The range extends. We may become each one.
This is the truth that lay concealed beneath
The fables of the East. Who kills a worm,
May tread some hero's dust. 'That dust again
May shine in arms, may glow in battle's front.
Thus may we live, and thus we still shall be.

WALTON.

But hast thou never felt desire, Belmont,
For individual life beyond the grave ?

And gives thee not that thought a single pang,
That thou thyself, Belmont, shalt cease to be ?

BELMONT.

(*With a dreary smile.*)

“ Man is a billow ; God the shoreless sea.”
So spake the seers of the olden time.
Once more to mingle with the Infinite,—
This is our end. Should we refuse the boon ?
Can we refuse it ? No ! 't is doom ; 't is fate.
Once I was in a storm. 'T was night. I slept
In a good barque, and dreamed of friends and
home.

Methought the sky was blue, the air was sweet,
Laden with votive offerings of the flowers ;
And they were there, the long-lost ones, the dead,
All there again in that ancestral hall.
But suddenly the sky grew black ; the wind
Began to howl, the house to rock, the earth
To reel beneath our feet,—and I awoke ;
Awoke to hear the shouts of frantic men,
And woman's scream, and the mad tempest's roar.
I felt the strong ship quiver as a horse
Under his rider's lash. The Captain cried,
“ Great God, we 're lost ! ” Ah ! there was terror
then.

Men's hearts gave way, that ne'er had quailed
before.

They fell upon the deck ; they cried to heaven.
All but myself. I struggled through the crowd.
One flung his arm around my neck, and said :
“ O pray, Belmont ! ” I sternly thrust him off,
And made my way above, and lashed myself
Fast to the mainmast. If an age, O Hell !
Spent in thy darkest confines, doth contain,
A tithe of that dread hour's agony,
Let me ne'er dwell a moment in thy pit.
But those weak wretches, how I envied them,—
And scorned by turns,—who thought their souls
should live
Forever, and yet shrieked, and raved, and prayed.
All that is past ; yet it is sad to think,
However high with hope the pulse may beat,
Whatever rapture kindle in the heart,
Or fire of genius glisten in the eye,
All, all must perish from the goodly earth,
As lightnings are extinguished in the sea.
Great sea of God ! so fathomless, so calm
Far down beneath the sparkle of thy waves ;
The laughter of the young, sweet music's charm,
Blushes of maidens at the words of love,
And smiles of mothers o'er their cradled joy ;—
These are the ripples playing o'er the Deep,—
O God, how deep, and how unmerciful !
But the strong voices of great orators,
Rousing the hearts of men to glorious deeds,
And the fierce shout of battle, and the rage

That overpowers fear in human breasts,—
Are they not billows surging mountain high,
And struggling heavenward for the mastery?
Yet both alike shall faint, and die away,—
Shall die in thee, O God, the pitiless!
Fate, grant me this, that what I am, be doomed
Not long to linger in the idle grave.
Let me not be the dull, insensate clod.
The storm, the whirlwind, heaven's resistless
fire,—
Such be Belmont. Or better still, be Man,
Man as he shall be, not as he is now.
As for the rabble, I would rather be
A crawling worm, or some curst pestilence,
The scourge of earth, stealing my way by night,
And blasting all the coward multitude.

WALTON.

“Man as he shall be,”—was it this thou saidst?
And hast thou yet a lingering hope of life
Beyond the Present?

BELMONT.

The sages taught us that Eternity
Moves not straight on, but in a cycle's round.
Five myriads of years that round requires;
Then what has happened shall occur again,

Another Tiphys be, and steer his ship,
The good ship Argo with its heroes choice,
Seeking the golden fleece from Colchian shore ;
And swift Achilles sail again to Troy,
And drag a Hector 'round the city walls.
In earlier life methought this might be true.
Matter was finite ; Æther, infinite ;
And, in the course of endless years, the Past
Must of necessity repeat itself,
Though it should take a myriad myriad years.
But when I saw the struggling Deity
Advancing step by step to higher forms,
Saw how imperfect were the noblest men,
The noblest always most dissatisfied,
And longing most for something unattained ;
I held there might arise a golden age
Foretold by Sibyls, and by horrid Fates,
Clotho and Lachesis and Atropos,
And promised to His followers by the Christ.
Then men shall be immortal like the gods,
Exalted men, of giant intellect,
Profound in knowledge, of supernal power
To fly on tireless wing from star to star,
And garner knowledge from the utmost heavens.
If I may not be God, the Infinite,
I would be Man, the highest form of God ;
Man with the grandeur that is yet to be.
But could that wondrous Being, so august,
Remember me and know that he was I ?

What is this Personality which binds
Past, present, future of our life in one?
What chain is this, unseen, impalpable,
Yet stronger than most ponderous links of steel?
Am I the same, that once, a little boy,
Hung 'round my mother's knee, and feared the
dark?

What is the during substance that abides
Through all the changes of our mortal state?
Sameness of brain and nerve, of form and mold?
Or,—matter changing—Æther still the same?
But when this human frame disintegrates,
And all its atoms scatter to the winds,
The bond is broken. It is I no more.

WALTON.

Despairing man, thine is a joyless faith.
Wert thou not happier to be as they
Who know not, think not of such fearful things?

BELMONT.

Thy words were wise, if happiness were all.
The highest crags are those most scarred and
riven
By the red thunderbolt. When winds are heard
Through the deep forest sighing, 't is the oak,
Lifting its lofty head above the rest,
That gives so plaintive answer to the breeze.

Noblest are saddest. Christ was sorrowful ;
And when I see His anguish-stricken face
From some high Olivet look down on Earth,—
The tear-drops stealing from His piteous eyes,—
I almost feel that I could worship Him.
And worship Him I do, but not as thou.
I bow before the sadness so divine,
World-sadness gathered in one woe intense.
As to myself, thus much I may disclose :
Once from the Andes' west acclivity
I saw a condor mounting tow'rd the skies.
There is a grandeur in a bird's ascent
That made my heart leap in me, from a boy.
And so I watched him circling higher still,
Almost unseen, when lo ! a lurid shaft
Shot from an envious cloud and pierced his heart.
Mine too it pierced. " Yet, thou proud bird," I
said,
" May I but reign like thee, and like thee die,
Without a moment's warning or a fear."
Nobly to die—yes, nobly,—that 's the word,—
This well becomes the great, and fitly ends
The life-long tragedy. Then let me fall
Leading my legions, dying sword in hand.
Let soldiers bear me to a soldier's grave ;
Let wild, impassioned, melancholy strains
Of martial music sadden all the air,
Supported by the cannon's sullen roar ;
And let men say, " Here lies what was Belmont."

WALTON.

Sorrow is great, but joy is greater still.
Thou wrongest Christ with any other thought.
I know that He was sorrowful on earth ;
But this was for a purpose,—for a time.
He bare our griefs, He carried all our woes ;
It pleased the Lord to bruise Him for our sakes ;
But now the bitterness of death is past.
God is forever blessed. I rejoice
To look above the storms that ravage earth,
To th' undisturbed serenity of heaven ;
As from some peak we view an azure sky
While hostile tempests war far, far below.

God is forever happy, and the good
Partake forever of His bliss and peace.
Man then at last shall realize those hopes,
Man there shall gratify those large desires,
Which now and here heave like a troubled sea
In some pent cavern by the ocean's marge,
That longs t' expatiate on the boundless main.
These are what Christ hath promised wretched
man.

What sayest thou of them ?

BELMONT.

They are prophetic. I have felt them oft,
Stirring the waters of my inmost soul ;

Yet they foretell not what myself shall be,
But what the godhood shall one day attain.
For progress is a fundamental law
Of individual men, the race, and God.
"Onward, still onward," is the word of march ;
And when the drumbeat of the Universe
Falls on the listening ear of Deity,
He presses forward with a warrior's step.
On, on forever ! There is no retreat.
His rest is but a sleeping on his arms.

Not so with us. The oak attains its size
After protracted centuries of growth,
Then gradually sinks into decay.
Man finds his acme,—first in what is called
His body ; then in what we style the soul ;
Then on his being's shore dies like a wave.
The Infinite proceeds far otherwise,
Halts but to gather strength for future deeds,
And those new deeds are greater evermore.

WALTON.

What thou rejectest is a personal God.
Thou dost accept the Pantheistic One,
The Absolute ; Entity tenuous,
Essence diffused throughout immensity,
That thinks not, feels not save by matter's aid ;
That slumbered through a long eternity,
And slumbers now more deeply than of old,

Except in this broad temple of the worlds,
So vast to us, yet but a point to Him.
To Him?—to It; that is the proper word.
And of this new-made temple we are priests.
Only in us can It say *Thou*, and *I*.
In us the *Æther* worshippeth itself;
Man is self-conscious God, and God is Man.
Man is, forsooth, the highest form of God!
Ah! in my wildest wanderings from Him,
I never strayed so far. Either no God,—
None, none at all,—or else a God in truth;
Distinct from Nature, Maker of the worlds;
No fiction crowned and seated on His throne.
I reverence but I cannot worship Man;
Much less beasts, birds or reptiles, stocks or
stones.

“God is not personal except in man.”

Such thy belief. Now how are we to know
That man is personal save by his works?
An author is a person, for he shows
Intelligence and will. An artist too
For the same reason. Look at Nature's book,
With gold and crimson, lily-white and blue
Illuminated; garnished with designs
Of mountains, forests, lakes, clouds, waterfalls.
If any man interpret what is writ,
Or if he catch a glimpse, just here and there,
Of the all-wondrous glory that enrobes
This little planet whereupon we dwell,

How loud are our encomiums on his skill !
And shall we say that He,—that That which
made

All, and immeasurably more, hath less
Of understanding and of will than Man ?
Can He be blind who formed the eye to see ?
Or deaf, who made the ear ? Was less required
To frame our bodies, exquisitely planned,
Than to discover, by research prolonged
Through many ages, how and why each part
Performs its functions ? Does the mother know
The structure of its curious organism,
As with unmeasured fondness she surveys
Her tender offspring nestling in her arms ?
How, of her substance, cartilage and bone,
Muscle and nerve, blood, artery and vein
Have been wrought out ? How from her crimson
tide

Soft silken hair and eyes of blue were made ?
Or why the father's forehead, or those lips,
Which she herself now presses to its cheek,
So re-appear and claim redoubled love ?
Or knows she aught of tissues cellular,
And all the deep economy of life ?
There is a wisdom loftier than man's ;
There is a purpose older than his will ;
There is a Spirit whose transcendent power
Created and sustains this universe.
Him I adore,—not that which He hath made.

BELMONT.

This fable of the priests I once believed,
And certainly some instinct leads the mind
T' attribute personality to God.
Man looks in Nature's mirror and beholds
His own reflection,—like a graceful tree
Leaning above a lake,—and calls it God.
He stands upon the Brocken of the world,
Sees his gigantic image on the mist,
And deems the spectral effigy divine.
Once I believed as thou. I might again,
But for the difficulties in the way.
God, to be God in thy sense of the word,
Must be not only wise and great, but good ;
Supremely good, aye ! good beyond our thought,
Is thy God good ? Answer me from thy heart.

WALTON.

Thyself hast said it. Good beyond the thought.
Of men or angels. Take thine upward flight
Through space, upon imagination's wing
For centuries, till thought is wearied quite,
And thy tired spirit droops and sighs for rest ;
Yet there are heights above thee, all un-
reached.
They never can be reached by aught save
God.

BELMONT.

If so, then wisdom, might,
And goodness, all are infinite in Him.
Look at this world, deluged with misery.
When has there been in all its history
An hour, a moment when it could be said,
There riseth not a bitter cry of woe
To Him, thou callest good? Despair and death,—
Hearts wrung with anguish, mine among the
rest,—

These, these have been the history of the world.
Has woman's piercing shriek above her dead
E'er ceased to ring in the Eternal's ear?
Has He not heard the sound engirdling earth,
The dismal wail caught up from land to land?
Man cries in vain to God. He hears us not;
Heeds not our frenzied prayer. O God of Love,—
If such there be,—when I stood by my son,
Mine only one, my boy, my beautiful,
And saw the death-dew gather on his face,
I had not prayed for many a long, dark year;
But being in extremity of grief,
I said, "Oh! mercy, fearful, unknown One."
He gasped for breath. I fell upon my knees,
And cried, "Behold my bleeding heart, O God,
That heart which Thou hast given me, if Thou
art."

No answer came. I heard the night winds moan;

I saw the moonlight resting on the lawn,
As peacefully as on my bridal eve ;
But heard not, saw not Him on whom I called.
I could not bear to see my darling die ;
So I strode out of doors. The stars moved on
Just as of old. Then I gave up to Fate,
Which beareth all things onward, men and worlds,
All, all alike, with one resistless law.
Therefore I say, the wisest are most sad ;
Yet wisely sad. Their sorrows should lie hid,
As ocean's horrid caverns 'neath the waves
Whose tranquil surface ripples in the breeze,
Or, stiller yet, reflects the fleecy clouds.
So should all genial fancies, lightsome thoughts,
Play o'er the great man's mind ; but all things
grand
Bury themselves within his mighty heart.
Let nothing but the lightning probe those depths,
Those rock-ribbed chasms where shipwrecked
treasures lie.

Why speak of this to-night ? I cannot tell.
Is the wine poisoned by yon goodly bowl,
That ought to give us thoughts if sad, yet sweet ?
Ah ! no. The chalice of my life is drugged,
And I but taste its bitter dregs to-night.

WALTON.

'T were vain to say that Sorrow is not here,
Nor has been through a sore and weary past.

But joy has had a dwelling-place on earth.
Man's cup is not all bitter. Not so dark
Seemeth this goodly earth to other eyes.
The fireside circle with its light and warmth,
The glow of health, the bounding pulse's play ;
And all th' exhilarating sense of life,
When on some balmy morn we wander forth
Through shady groves, o'er meadows broad and
green,
While the young lambs are playing, and the
birds
Carol aloft or flit from tree to tree ;
The distant cock-crow, and the plowboy's song,
The sunshine's splendor free to all the world,
The swarms of insects sporting by the rill,
And the blue sky above us, tell not me
Of a malignant deity on high.
Surely we have the rains from bounteous heaven,
And pastures rich, and kindly fruits of earth,
Filling our hearts with gladness and with food.
Storms rend the sky, but then come restful days,
And God bestows ten thousand benefits
Unneeded for existence on this earth,
But teaching us the goodness of His heart.
Forget not all the pleasure thou didst draw
From thy poor son. His birth was hailed with
joy ;
And when thou sawest him in his mother's arms,
The while she lay so pale, so beautiful,

Thy bosom heaved with calm and pure delight.
For months and years he gladdened all thy
home.

God lent him to thee for a happy space ;
He took his own,—thy anguish knew no bounds,
And thy one sorrow drowned a thousand joys.

BELMONT.

Walton, O stay thine hand ! Ope not again
The wounds that I had thought would bleed no
more.

They bleed afresh to-night.

WALTON.

I fain would soothe
Thy bitter agony, not probe it to the quick.
Oh ! had the quiet of that moonlit hour
But calmed thy troubled soul, and taught thee
trust

In God's great mercy ! Hadst thou wept and
said,

“ O God of love, thy will, not mine, be done ! ”

If an Almighty Being reigns on high,
How could it profit Him to be unjust,—
To be malign to aught that He hath made ?
The weak resort to treachery and guile ;
The avaricious rob for filthy gain,

Which they could not acquire by other means.
But boundless strength and boundless opulence
Need not to stoop to measures base like these.
Then shall we judge that God, so often good,
Is yet malicious for pure malice' sake?
Hyper-Satanic and incredible !

Deep, in our hearts the sovereign power of love
Has been implanted by our Maker's hand,
That we may love our fellow-men, but most
That we may love the Fountain of all good.
For power and wisdom none of us can love,
But all love nobleness, self-sacrifice,
Gentleness, sweetness, generosity.
Can love be bought? Ah! yes. But we must
pay

Gold for its gold ; for love is bought with love.
Can we love cruelty? Love malice? No.
If God be cruel, be malignant, then
He hath so wrought the temper of our souls,
That we can never love Him. Why were this?
Why give us love for that which He was not?
Nay more, there is a hatred in our breasts
For cruelty, oppression, falsehood, wrong.
Such things deserve our hatred ; and we feel
That scorn of them is virtuous, is right.
Why form us thus, if He deserved our hate?
Why did He lift us higher than the brutes,
That nothing know of virtue or of vice?
At least, we should not then have hated Him.

Why not have framed us that we should revere
What now our inmost spirits do condemn,—
A deity of malice and revenge ?
Admire and love the cruel and the base,
And hate the godlike, and abhor the good ?
But as we are, the noblest of our race
Most love the good and most detest the ill.
If God should perpetrate one cruel deed,
It would forever overthrow His throne.
Then must we take our choice between these two :
A senseless substance which thou namest God,
An idiotic something,—who knows what ?—
Evolving from itself the loftiest minds,
And purest virtues that adorn the world ;
Or else a Being great, and wise, and good
Beyond the utmost limit of our thought ;
Whose ways we cannot fully understand,
But who has given us His solemn pledge,
That through the ages He will do the right.
Most Merciful, Most Gracious is His name ;
Abundant both in goodness and in truth ;
Yet He will punish sin.

BELMONT.

Sin ! Punish sin ! And what is sin, I pray ?

WALTON.

That which is hateful to a holy God.
But say thyself.

BELMONT.

Sin is a milestone on the Appian way,
Past which we journey to th' eternal city ;
A stairway by whose steps we climb to heaven.
The brutes feel shame ; they never know remorse ;
For only man on earth is self-condemned.
Sin is an outer shell, that binds and chafes ;
We must burst through it ere we wing our flight.
Oh, stairway steep and narrow ! Heaven, how
high !

We slip, we fall, we lacerate our flesh,
We cry aloud with pain, and this is Hell.
No other hell awaits us. 'T were unjust.
Eternal city, art thou but a dream
Of slumbering godhood in these poor, poor hearts?
The centuries pass. Thou seemst no nearer us.
If nearer, thou art still beyond our reach ;
And in this curst Campagna's pestilence
We sicken, faint, and die afar from thee.
We die, alas ! but never live again.
Perhaps the godhood that has risen above
The brute, and sins and suffers now in man,
Shall reach, one day, the height of sinless heaven.
So thought the Nazarene. It may be true,
But not for those who dwell on earth to-day.

WALTON.

And hast thou known remorse ?

BELMONT.

The godhood in me oft has felt its pang.
The Æther vibrates in a certain way,
And years pass by, and lo ! a random word
Falls on the ear ; the former thrill returns,
And the dead Past leaps into life again.
Ev'n while I speak, a scene comes back to view ;
A leafy wood, a dim secluded nook
Fanned by the early breeze, the sun not up ;
Two surgeons, and two seconds, I and he.
A voice cries " Fire ! " One shot rings out.

'T is mine.

He pales, he sinks, is caught in friendly arms,
And gently laid along upon the sward.
" Shot through the lungs " : From nostrils and
from lips
Hot scarlet blood flows forth. He gasps for
breath,
And his wild eyes stare upward, all aghast,
Into the dread and fathomless Abyss
That holds all worlds in its relentless grasp.
" Fly ! " shouts my second. " Fly ! the law !
the law ! "

Have I not fled o'er scorching desert sands,
Through mountain fastnesses, o'er oceans broad ?
Fled,—but he follows me. There 's no escape.
Into that same Abyss my eyes look out,
Beyond the worlds, beyond the Day, the Light,

The joy, the hope that cheer the heart of man.
Oh, that our prison walls, impalpable,
Yet stronger far than thickest plates of steel,
Would close, and crush the universe and me !
I stand in battle's front. Men call me brave ;
They do not know how much I long to die.
To right, to left of me, a thousand fall ;
My life is charmed. Alas ! that it is so.

WALTON.

Thy life is spared ; then wilt thou not repent ?
Thy sin was great, but it may be forgiven.

BELMONT.

Forgiven ? The past can never be recalled.
No power on earth, in fabled heaven or hell,
Can change a particle of what has been.
Forgive ? How can the Æther pardon sin ?
Unconscious deity forgive a crime ?
The ancients should have made another Fate,
With long, gray hair, with sunken, haggard eyes
Forever looking backward at the Past,
Wringing her lean and bony hands in vain,
And weeping tears that scald her withered cheeks.

WALTON.

This holy book reveals a conscious God,
Who gave His Son to die for sinful man.

His blood can wash away our foulest stains,
Not by annihilating what is past,
But by atoning for our blackest guilt.
Love bids thee come, as multitudes have come,
To find forgiveness in the Crucified.
This is the way to holiness and heaven ;
The path thou treadest leads to death and hell.

CANTO VIII.

The Christ.

He said and paused, and there was silence now
About the festive board ; when suddenly
There fell upon their ears a thunder-clap
With startling nearness. Then Belmont arose,
Went to the tent door, and looked out again.
“ ’T is very dark, without,” he said ; “ Is this
The first loud peal, or have the rest of you
Heard others ? ” Mowbray answered, “ There
have been
Several but none so near.” Belmont returned,
“ I do remember now, as ’t were a dream,
The vague impression of a sullen roar,
Which, whether it were thunder, or the sound
Of cannon at a distance, I knew not.
Now, while I look, it does not seem so dark,
The dusky outlines of the neighboring tents
Show like huge earth-born monsters ; and afar
A glow hangs dim above the city walls.
Night’s noon is near. I ever loved this hour,
So calm, so quiet after day’s rude noise.
O Night, thou silent mother of us all,

From whom we came, to whom we shall return
To slumber on thy breast, world without end ;
The winds, thy mystic daughters, wail, as now ;
Thou speakest not a word. No sound of grief
Escapes thy lips. Thou gently coverest us
With thy soft mantle, and we wake no more.

'T is strange our spies come not. 'T is time
they should,

For it grows late. My age demands repose.
I am not what I was. These youthful sports
Weary me, and in truth I often yearn
To sink into that long, unbroken rest."

Returning to the table, then, he said :
"Thou errest greatly, Walton. I have marked
Each thought, each argument thou hast advanced,
And nothing thou hast said is new to me.
Thou holdest still that hideous dream of hell,
Which artful priests, and women long have taught,
Priests unto women, women to their babes,
Who cover up their heads for fear of ghosts,
And kneel as wisely to a vengeful God.
The superstition tarries in the mind,
And grown men shrink from passing graves by
night,
And tremble at the thought of endless woe.
'T was thus the priests for ages ruled the world,
But now the world is wiser than the priests,
And tramples superstition in the dust ;
Nor brooks the folly which so oft had driven

To groans and prayers before a crucifix,
Far from the haunts of men, in cells and caves
Beneath the darkly burning taper's ray,
While penitents in sackcloth, cord, and cowl,
Lie prostrate on a floor of earth or stone.
And now no mothers immolate their babes.
Man offers not whole human hecatombs
To save himself from hell's eternal flames.
Away, then, with this frightful phantasy ;
Away with priestcraft and its lake of fire.

Then as to Christ, that more than wondrous
man,

In many things so far beyond his age ;
Beautiful fable of those ancient times,
A smile upon the face of deity !
None can admire the story more than I.
With him in thought how often have I trod
Along the shores of Lake Gennesaret,
Or walked upon the waters by his side ;
Have heard the plashing of the mighty waves,
Felt the cool waters lave my sandalled feet,
Beheld the bark in which the twelve were tossed
Fearful amid the tempest and the gloom.
I have stood with him, where the great have
failed,

In obloquy, desertion, torture, death.
Then, where the story into fable turns,
Have seen him issue from his rocky bed ;
Have heard his voice breathing of love and peace,

To those who in his hour of danger fled.
Yes, I have seen him mounting to the skies,
And when the cloud received him from my sight,
I have turned sadly back to earth, convinced
That all the generations she has borne,
Could show none like Him. Moments there
have been

When I was tempted to admit His claims,
Abandon truth and reason, and believe.
But it were idle to believe a myth.
'Rose from the dead ! Ascended into heaven !
Sits at the right hand of Almighty God !
Shall come to judge the living and the dead !!'
What ! shall he sit upon a radiant throne,
And summon all the nations to his bar ?
That Nazarene ? That dead and buried Jew ?
How could he judge the dead ? ''

WALTON.

The dead shall live again.

SEYMOUR.

Grant me a word. The dead shall live again ?
Whom meanest thou by this ? The multitude
That dwelt on earth in all the hoary past ?
Populous cities ? Long-forgotten tribes ?
The denizens of all the varied climes

From torrid heats to Nova Zemblas' snows?
Men of the stone, the bronze, the iron age?
Thousands of millions shall come forth again
Out of their sepulchres?

WALTON.

Their souls still live.
 Their bodies shall awake from out the dust,
 And, re-united to their spirits, stand
 Before the judgment-seat of Christ, our God.

SEYMOUR.

O madman ! Ha ! Ha ! Ha !
(A satirical scream outside of the tent echoes his laughter.)
(Seymour turns pale, clutches his sword-handle, and springs to his feet, exclaiming,)
 If there 's a devil, he 's let loose to-night !

BELMONT.

Be seated, Seymour. Ho ! there, sentinel !
Arrest that prowler just behind the tent
And bring him hither.

Now once more of Christ.
What I have said is well. Would it were all !
But, ah ! there is a very different side
To this grand character. 'T is terrible

To hear his threatenings of eternal wrath,
His stern denunciations of his foes ;
And all are foes who yield not to his sway.
Shall all the sheeted dead before him stand ?
And shall he say to them who loved him not,
“ Depart, ye cursed ! ”—whither, dreadful Judge ?
“ Into the endless fires, to company
With devils and the damned ! ” I cannot read
These words without a tremor and a rage.
For what have I to do with this dead Christ ?
Dead, buried thirty centuries ago !
He be my judge ? Consign me to the flames ?
Yet this is idle ; nor does it become
My age, my station, thus to fight the wind.
Again I tell thee, Walton, he is dead.
'T is a mere myth, that rising from the tomb.
As to the fact, I should as soon believe
The Paphian Venus rose from out the sea,
Or gods joined battle on the plains of Troy.
But these his followers, who with pious zeal
Still prate you of religion, faith, and love,
And hypocritically kneel and weep,
And beg for mercy from the Nazarene,—
Delivering all who dare dissent from them
To the long tortures of an endless hell,—
Pah ! how I loathe them ! Grant me this, O
Fate,
In their own blood to drown them, one and all.
Let it be said in all earth's coming years,

That I was leader of the mighty host,
That crushed beneath their heels this serpent
brood.

WALTON.

Ere thou revilest thus God's blessed Son,
Thou shouldst bethink thee of thine own foul
god.

All souls of men are part of deity,—
Such is thy faith. Now see what thence results.
All acts of shame, all deeds of infamy,
That have defiled the history of the world,
Cold-blooded murders, shocking cruelties,
Done by the inquisition's rack, and fire,
Have been the acts, the deeds, the crimes of God !
My God hates evil with eternal hate.
His view of sin is not the same with thine.
With thee it has some element of ill ;
Weakness, perchance ; human infirmity ;
To be avoided, for it brings remorse.
Thou dost rebel against God's just decree
To punish sin beyond this present world,
So long as wickedness itself shall last.
Not so with them whose hearts, divinely touched,
Feel that the wrath of Heaven 'gainst sin is just.
In them each thunder of the fiery mount
Wakes a responsive echo. With what joy
Unto the covert from the storm they flee !
But there are those—it may be thou art one—

In whom a warfare long and stern is waged
Against this painful sense of ill-desert.
In vain the Spirit of the living God
Whispers of future woe, of wrath to come.
Such thoughts are deemed but enemies to peace,
Foes to be strangled by life's busy cares,
Wrenched from the mind, drowned in the mad-
dening bowl,
By pleasure's soft enchantments charmed to rest,
As threatening specters by the lute and harp.
By such devices is the heavenly Guest
Grieved quite away. Conscience is drugged to
sleep.
The arch fiend blinds the unbelieving heart,
And marks the guilty spirit for his own.
Oh ! it is sad to see a soul of man
Fighting its downward way to endless woe.
'T is said of one of old who ventured far
Into the mazes of a labyrinth,
That through the darkness of its tortuous paths,
Whence none before him ever had returned,
He yet retraced his footsteps by the aid
Of a slight thread he saw not, but could feel.
So, if there lingers in thy heart, Belmont,
One faint misgiving that thou mayst have erred,
If thou feelst aught of the great love of God,
Which like that slender thread retains its hold
On thee, thou wanderer from light and life,
Turn back thy feet before it be too late.

If thou wilt not, then mayst thou rest assured,
'There is a Law from which thou canst not fly ;
And a Law-giver to enforce His law.

BELMONT.

Enough ! The die is cast.
Leave me then, Walton ; trouble me no more.
I might have heard thee many years ago ;
But now thou hadst as well talk to the grave.
I have no hope of heaven, no fear of hell.
Time will decide between us, which was right.
Time answers all enigmas. It should be
Hewn out of stone, of like colossal size
With Egypt's sphinx,—set face to face with it.
A few more days will solve all doubts for me,
However long the rest of you may live.
Aye ! in a trice a cannon-ball may teach—
Rude master—more than all the wisest men
Ancient or modern. I have made my choice.

WALTON.

But little more remains for me to say :
To thee, Belmont, as generalissimo,
I now resign my place upon thy staff,
My rank and my commission under arms.

(He lays a folded paper on the table by Belmont.)

My purpose is to leave the camp at once,
Nor longer fight in this unholy war.
Yet ere I go, I take this cup of wine,
As yet untasted, and profess my faith
In Christ, the Crucified, the Nazarene.
Saviour of men, I see Thee on Thy cross.
Thy life is almost spent. Thy dying eyes
Are looking softly, tenderly on me.
Thy heart beats slowly, throbbing forth Thy
love,
Love that no word of earth or heaven could
speak.

Thou art surrounded by Thine enemies :
Of Thine Apostles all but one are fled.
Ev'n thus to-night in all this mighty host
Only one heart is found that pities Thee.
Thou saidst, " Remember Me ! " If I forget
Thy love, Thy grief, Thine agony, Thy death,
Forget Thou me in the great hour of doom !

*(He tastes the wine, and replaces the cup on the
table.)*

CANTO IX.

The Alarm.

Now suddenly a cry of terror rose
And nearer grew. All started to their feet
And hastened to the tent door. Still the sound
Waxed louder and more terrible. The camp
Was rousing here and there with hurried rush,
As when a whirlwind sweeps along the ground
Covered with autumn leaves. The multitude
Were in confusion. Now the drums began
To beat th' alarm, and the hoarse trumpets'
notes

Sounded a rally. "Is it a new attack?"
Exclaimed Belmont. "I hear no musketry,
No war-cry." While he spoke the missing spies
Up to the tent door rushed in breathless haste.
"How now, Monteith? What tidings dost thou
bring?"

Who thus replied :—" 'T is strange, most strange.
We saw

Upon the city walls a ghostly band
Treading the sentry rounds. They seemed above
The stature of mankind ; their raiment, white,

And, through the darkness, dazzling to our eyes.
These things I saw myself. In them there was
In act and mien transcendent majesty ;
And in their hands bore each a flaming sword.
I would have tarried longer, but my men
Were panic-stricken and they fled amain.
Our sentinels refused to let them pass.
Hence I o'ertook them. Meanwhile what we
saw,
Was noised along the outskirts of the camp ;
And to allay the tumult, on we pressed
Toward headquarters."

" Art thou mad, Monteith ? "

Replied Belmont :—" Come, I will go myself,
And see if there be truth in what thou sayst.
But hold ! a speedier plan occurs to me.
Haste, bring my largest field-glass. It may be
That of these goblins I shall catch a glimpse
Before they vanish out of mortal view.
Can they be seen in th' dark ? Or shall I wait
For a good flash of lightning ? "

Then Monteith

Essayed to answer him, but peal on peal
Crashed the loud thunders as it were their last,
And Heaven were scourging Hell, Hell cursing
Heaven.

Then said the chief: " Methinks I do descry
The cause of all this panic ; 't is a trick
Of the shrewd enemy this stormy night."

Now was there heard a strange sepulchral
sound.

It was not thunder. No. It seemed to come
From some place underground. The firm earth
shook,

While overhead sobbed the affrighted winds ;
And men began to fly they knew not where.
Louder than thousand thunders came a roar,
And this was followed by unearthly screams,
Bitter as death, and piercing all the air,
And some cursed God and gave them up to die.
What could it be? Anon, a runner came
And shouted : " Fly ! Fly for your lives ! The
earth

Is rent. An awful chasm has swallowed up
Whole legions of our troops."

" Fly ? saidst thou ; fly ? "

Exclaimed Belmont ; " So perish all who fly !
Fly ! Never ! " Then he stamped upon the
ground,

And cried : " Be still, thou coward Earth ! Be still,
Ye frenzied winds ! And you, ye thunderbolts,
Speak not again ! "

Then was there heard a voice
Chanting in measured accents on the gale :

" Day of vengeance ! Day of burning,
All the world to ashes turning,
Seer and Sibyl thee portend.

Trump of God, thy clang astounding,
Through the sepulchres resounding,
Quick and dead alike shall hear.

Death affrighted, Nature quaking,
Myriads from their graves awaking
Shall before the judge appear.

Book of Doom, thy blackened pages
Hold the sins of all the ages ;
Nothing that our fear assuages.

King of majesty tremendous,
Save me from Thy wrath stupendous,
From the woe that shall not end."

To whom Belmont : " Away, thou fool, away !
Who art thou ? " Seymour said : " It is the
voice

Of crazy George." " Away then ! " said the chief ;
" Off ! Off to Bedlam ! Thou but seest the flash
Of the mad lightnings,—hearest the frantic winds,
Heaven's thunders, and the groans of trembling
earth.

A shame upon you, men. To-morrow morn
Will bring a sky of blue, a breath of spring."
" To-morrow ? " shrieked the madman ; " Ha !
to-morrow
Will be eternity."

“ Again, I say,
Away ! Begone ! ”

The maniac clenched his fists,
And cursed him with a curse of withering hate ;
Then chanted yet more wildly than before :

“ No stifled moan,
No dying groan ;
No parting cry
To the dear God on high !
The features of his latest breath
As horrible remain in death.”

This said, he went his way. At intervals
His voice rang through the tempest, as he howled
Like some wild beast : “ Woe ! Woe to all the
earth !

Woe unto living men ! Woe to the dead ! ”

Now the storm lulled ; the thunder peals gave
place

To that low, sullen roar, when Nature lies
Like a caged lion 'neath th' uplifted lash.

“ Come,” said Belmont ; “ re-enter now the tent,
Out of this rabble tumult. What ! the lamps
Are shattered ? One still burns. Relight the rest.
There is no sleep to-night : we must await
The coming dawn. Ho ! Walton, art thou here ? ”
Who thus addressed, replied : “ I would not take

Advantage of the panic to escape.
Such had my temper been, I would have gone
Without appearing in this place to-night.
You have me in your power." He laid his hand
Upon his breast. "Here, strike me to the heart,
If you adjudge that I deserve to die."
He paused. None raised a hand. He said : "I
knew

The last great day could not be far removed ;
But did not think it was so near as this.
Ev'n yet 't is not too late. You may repent,
For Mercy's beauteous gate is open still.
But, if ye shall refuse to enter in,
God's glittering sword is lifted up on high,
And His wrath burneth to the lowest hell.
Will none of you go with me?"

Seymour then,

As one bewildered, sprang up from his seat.
Belmont cried fiercely, "Down ! thou traitor,
down !"

Then Walton : "For eternity decide.
O what undying interests depend
Upon a single step. God help thee now !"
Seymour's lip quivered : "If I only thought—"
"Aye ! if thou thoughtest," coldly said Belmont ;
"I'll tell thee what to do. Go, join the foe !
Meanly desert, and then behold thyself
To-morrow when this stormy night is past,
A renegade amid our enemies,

Scorn of our camp, and deeper scorn of theirs.
But surely know that when the city falls
Into our hands, as very soon it must,
Thou shalt be gibbeted the first of all.”
In silence, then, he looked another way :
But presently he turned to him again ;
“ Art thou still here ? Why waitest thou ? Be-
gone ! ”

Seymour sank in his chair ; covered his face
With his soft hands, and wept convulsively.
The chieftain sneered : “ Come, dry these girlish
tears.

To-morrow thou mayst leave the haunts of war.
I ever thought thou wert more fit for love,
For song, and sparkling wine, and woman’s
smiles,

Than for the clash of arms on battlefields.”
Then he : “ O hard, unfeeling, wicked man !
Thy taunts are too severe. ’T is over now ;
But there came back a scene of other days.
Methought I knelt beside my mother’s knee ;
Once more she laid her hand upon my head,
And taught me say, ‘ Our Father,’ and I felt
Her warm breath, as she said, ‘ God bless my
child,’

And pressed her lips upon my little cheek ;
And then I clasped my arms about her neck
And fell asleep to dream of God and Heaven.
O Mother dear, O God, O piteous Heaven,

Why do ye smile thus on me from the past ?
Close thy sweet eyes, my mother ! I am all
Unworthy of that look of tenderness.
Go, Walton ; we shall never meet again.
Never, O never ! Think of me as one
Whose light of hope was gone out in despair ;
Who fought life's battle wearily and ill,
Who won not time, yet lost eternity."

Whereat the chief :—" I too a mother had,
Who reared me as a lioness her young.
Whether to bless or curse her, I know not.
But she is dead, and I shall follow soon."
" Soldiers, farewell, a last, a long farewell !"
Said Walton, as he walked from out the tent.

After a moment's pause Belmont leaped up,
And drew his sword. " Halt ! Walton ; halt !"
he cried.

Seymour rushed in between him and the door ;
" Stay ! stay ! Belmont, and let him go in
peace."

" Seymour, away !" There was a tiger's look
In his grey eyes, and on his parted lips
A ghastly devil-smile. " Walton shall die.
His courage dazzled me, but shall not save
A traitor's life. This sword shall not be sheathed,
Till it is bathed in blood."

This having said,
He thrust him from the way and hastened forth.
Then from the blackness that o'erhung the camp

There fell a bolt of fire upon the point
Of his uplifted sword, and set the tent
Ablaze with light above the noonday sun,
While a strong sulphurous odor filled the place,
And a keen thunder-clap deafened all ears.
One instant, and the dazzling gleam was gone ;
Then tremblingly they went without and saw
Belmont upon the ground, still sword in hand.
Thus perished he, the Leader of the host ;
This, the last death of all the human race.

INTERMEZZO.

The Two Kings.

It is a castle strong and high,
And haughtily athwart the sky
The massy towers uploom.
'T is night, and through the windows gleam
Full many a light in ruddy stream
Far out upon the gloom.

Midnight ! The clangor of a bell
From topmost tower is heard to swell
Out over sea and land ;
Over the mountain, down the dell,
Over the plain. They know full well
The sound, that mystic band.

But never in such sort before
Rang that knell the broad earth o'er ;
Never so loud, so clear.
They list, they pale ; then trooping home,
With haste, with fright, with speed they come ;
They come in haste, and fear.

“To horse ! to horse !” The coursers sweep
O'er deserts. On the rocky steep
The flint-fires fiercely flash ;
And where across the wave they take
Their way, in long and snowy wake
The steel-trod billows dash.

Anon they reach the castle gate.
The myriad lesser soldiers wait
In clamorous dread and wonder ;
Three officers in gorgeous dress
A-through the crowd and tumult press,
And at the portal thunder.

Through all the place resounds the din.
The porter's voice is heard within :—
“Now who be ye, and whence ?”
Then answer came, “O warder true,
Famine and Slaughter, they are two ;
The third is Pestilence.”

This heard, the gate flies open wide.
Into the court the chieftains ride,
And hurriedly dismount.
Their foam-flecked chargers droop beside
The sculptured lions' granite pride,
Beside the central fount.

They seek the hall where sits in state
Dusky yet grand, the Potentate,
Death, on his iron throne ;

No courtiers there on either hand,
No body-guards around him stand,
The Monarch is alone.

Red Slaughter speaks : " Hail, mighty Lord,
I heard th' alarm, and stayed my sword
Uplifted in the air."

Pale Famine next : " A mother stood
Ready to kill her babe for food ;
I fled and left them there."

Last Pestilence essays to speak,—
A plague-spot in each burning cheek ;
His lips are deathly white :
" A glorious prey escaped from me,
A city sleeping peacefully ;
Why are we here to-night ? "

Then Death,—his voice is weak and drear,—
" Slaughter, my eldest-born, draw near.
Hush ! Is that door shut to ?
Famine and Pestilence, all three,
Nearer, come nearer unto me ;
Hark what I say to you.

" Ye know our lives are bound in one ;
When dies the father, dies the son.
I feel about my heart
A cold sensation and a pang,
As I were struck by serpent fang,
Or pierced by icy dart."

Now in that dim and lofty hall
A shudder seizes on them all,
Death and his sons, all four ;
Yet Slaughter whispers : " Never fear,
For thou shalt live yet many a year,
A century, aye ! and more."

" It is a lie !" The words of doom
Echo sharply through the room.
They look,—they hold their breath.
" It was the wind," saith Famine ; then
Rolls through the vaulted arch again,
" It is a lie, O Death !"

Between them and the bolted door
Upriseth through the solid floor
A spectre gaunt and old,
A spectre of gigantic size ;
Two blazing caverns are his eyes,
His hands a sceptre hold.

And on his head a diadem,
Lustrous with many a sparkling gem,
Rests, ponderous and golden ;
His hair and beard are long and hoar,
In dark folds trail upon the floor
His garments quaint and olden.

" O thou," he cries, " so pitiless
To mortal weakness and distress,
Thy throne too long has stood.

Thine is a heart that could not spare
The young, the old, the brave, the fair,
The beautiful, the good.

“ Ah ! why could nought escape thy rage,—
Nor reverend feebleness of age
Nor manhood’s strength and pride,
Nor infant nestling in the arms
Of its fond mother, nor the charms
Of the sweet youthful bride ?

“ No cry for mercy e’er could turn
Thee from thy purpose fell and stern,
Cruel, relentless One !
To thee no mercy shall be shown,
Thy last red thunderbolt is thrown.
O Death, thy work is done.”

They gasp for breath, both sons and sire ;
They quail before those eyes of fire ;

“ Dread Goblin, who art thou ? ”

“ Who am I ? Ha ! I heard that bell.
I too came hither. I am Hell !
Death, dost thou know me now ?

“ Tremble ! Ye die before the morn.
I that was old, ere ye were born,
Live on for evermore.”

His sceptre strikes the iron crown
From off Death’s head. It falleth down
And rings upon the floor.

The clangor spreads through courts and halls ;
Then quake the ancient castle walls

From base to turret high.

The rabble soldiery, that wait
Impatient at the guarded gate,
Hear a loud, bitter cry.

Now on the pavement hard and cold,
Stamps with his foot, that spectre old ;
The crown sinks through the stone.
Then up the yawning fissure through
Bursts a flame of ghastly blue
Before the iron throne.

From far below, with reeling brain
They hear a howl, a clanking chain ;
They hear the surge and roar,
As of a fiery, heaving main,
And with one voice they cry again,
More loudly than before.

The desperate soldiers charge the guard,
They force the gate,—to the grey court-yard
Impetuously dash.
They halt ; the boldest go before,
And rush against the bolted door.
It yieldeth with a crash.

They see in terror and amaze
A Spectre standing by a blaze,
Wrapped in a long, dark shroud.

Back they recoil appalled, and cower.
“ Ha ! Ha ! It is your mortal hour ! ”
The Goblin laughs aloud.

He stamps once more. Then rocks the wall ;
Earth opens and engulfs them all,
King, castle, soldier, son.
It closes with a hollow moan ;
Thy last red thunder-bolt is thrown ;
O Death, thy work is done.

CANTO X.

Novissima.

Now partial darkness rested on the world,
For the quick lightnings ceased to leap from
heaven.

But still earth trembled, and the sheeted fire
Suffused the concave of th' o'erhanging sky
Fitfully. From midway the upper deep
The moon gloomed on the sight a blood-red spot.
"Come, soldiers," said Monteith. "Delay not
thus.

It may be that his life is not extinct,
And it may be recovered. Let us see."
He led the way. They raised the fallen chief,
Bore him within and laid him on the board,
Moving the flagon and the cups aside.
Then stripping off his clothes to find the wound,
They saw a long black mark adown his back
From head to foot. It was the lightning's path.
"It is all over with him. He is dead."
They bathed the corpse, and then in decent haste
Arrayed the body, laying on his breast
The blade that oft o'er battle-fields had waved ;
But strove in vain his features to compose.

Do what they would, a bitter scowl remained.
Meanwhile the news had scattered far and wide,
And a crowd gathered at the marquee door.
Then in stalked Vinton, chanting mournfully—

“No parting moan,
No dying groan,
No parting cry,
To the dear God on high !”

They turn, they stare at his fantastic guise,
Clothed in gay rags, while from his wreath-bound
head

His hair dishevelled on his shoulders lies.
He sings again as he looks on the dead :

“The features of his latest breath
As horrible remain in death.”

At this Monteith exclaimed : “O leave the dead !
For if there be a wizard, thou art he.

Go, Vinton, go in peace. We pity thee.”

“Pity yourselves, not me,” the madman said.

“Yet go, good Vinton ; do !” Monteith replied,

“And lead this over-curious crowd away.”

“It is thy last command, and I obey.

Come, let us go.” And as he went, he sang,

“I hear from far
Th’ Almighty’s car,
The rushing wing
Of cherubim who bring
Jehovah’s Son to judgment dire.

I see on high
The chariot wheels flash fire.
Soon heaven and earth shall fly
Before that dread mysterious eye
Which pierceth to Creation's utmost shore.
Time, hoary Time, thyself shalt be no more."

With him the rest in silence all withdrew.
Then were the lights extinguished, all save one ;
The tent door closed, a guard before it placed.
Seymour within paced slowly to and fro
Abstractedly, and sighed from time to time.
The rest o'erwearied sank upon the earth,
And slumbered waiting for the coming dawn.

Now was there heard an angel shout from heaven,
And a loud trump that shook the firmament,
And the earth answered with a frightful groan,
Compared with which her thunders all in one
Were as the south wind's softly breathing plaint.
Travail, O Earth ! Thy birth-throes are upon
thee !

The countless nations sleeping in the dust
Awake. Flesh unto flesh, bone unto bone
Join in the graves. The coffin-lids burst off.
Up through the sod struggle the sheeted dead.
Beautiful cemeteries, graveyards waste

And overgrown with thorns and briars rude,
Lone hillsides, dark and unfrequented glens,
Where, of old time, Murder hath hid his prey,
Teem with new life, with numbers vast are
thronged.

The monster sea disgorges all her dead.
Shudder, O Earth, thy death-pangs are upon thee.

Scarce are the echoes of that dreadful blast
Hushed into silence, ere a prodigy
Enters the tent,—a headless female form
In costly cerements robed ; and now the skull,
Stripped of its ornaments, resumes its place,
But clothed with flesh as in the former days,
And from her eyes flame forth the fires of hell.
She shrieks to Seymour, “Wretch, art thou
alive ?

Didst think that thou wouldst see my face no
more ?

That I was dead and ne’er would live again ?
To-night ’t was granted me to leave the pit
And come with Satan to thy last carouse.”
Upon the instant comes a second blast
From the dire trumpet, and all living men
Are changed, and in the twinkling of an eye
Mortals become immortal. Endless life
Thrills through affrighted millions round the
earth ;
Thrills through the trembling Seymour, and he
grasps

The fateful dagger,—strikes it to his heart,—
Then draws it forth all bloodless ; but the pain
Is more intense, than in the mortal state.
He falls not, reels not. Life in him is strong,
Strong for the ages of eternity.
And now he cries, “ Great God, I cannot die ! ”
And hurls the poniard down upon the floor.
Quick as the lightning’s flash, the woman stoops,
And snatches from the floor the jeweled blade ;
Then screams, while listening devils quake and
quail,
“ I keep this weapon evermore for thee ! ”

The Dawn.

Morning of Eternity,
Dawning on Time’s troubled sea,
Bid the murky shadows flee,
Let thy ’larum grand
An august reveille roll
Round the world from pole to pole,
Pass the farthest Ocean’s goal,
Thunder o’er the land.

Done ! The trump sublimely sounds.
From the ancient battle-grounds,
From the abbey’s sacred bounds,
From the ruins hoary,

Warriors, on their arms that sleep,
Startled out of slumbers deep,
From their centuried bivouac leap
At the call of glory.

Heroes, tower above the storm !
With your storied valor warm !
Shout the martial order, " Form
Into line of battle !"
Haply hang above the grave
Banners once your own, ye brave ;
Seize again and bid them wave,
Where the death-shot rattle.

Conquerors from the buried past,
Deem ye this your clarion blast ?
Can these legions, trooping fast,
Warlike legions be ?
These, the groans of soldiers dying ?
That, the tramp of cowards flying ?
Shrieks, to God for mercy crying,
Shouts of victory ?

Is the earth, in terror quaking,
With the roar of ordnance shaking,
Or with charge of horsemen breaking
Through the front of war ?
Wherefore, with that quick surprise,
Raise ye to the clouds your eyes ?

Whom discern ye in the skies
On His judgment car ?

Hearts that not before have failed,
Cheeks by peril never paled,
Eyes in battle's brunt unquailed,
Own the Godhead's might ;
Voices now in terror call,
" Rocks and mountains on us fall,
Cover us as with the pall
Of eternal night ! "

The misty curtain of the clouds rolled up,
And in the air, His glittering hosts amid,
The King of Glory from His car stepped forth,
And took His seat upon the judgment throne.
The Nazarene's stern eyes, sweeping the earth,
Fell on Belmont. Then first the chieftain feared.
Again the trumpet sounded, and a shout
Went up from all heaven's army, that the stars
Shook in their sockets ; direful meteors fell,
As, when the tempests through the forests rage,
The leaves in thickening numbers strew the
ground.

Then Earth swept out from underneath their feet,
And all mankind were caught up to the clouds.
Now was the ponderous orb enwrapped in flame.

Sped the huge globe away. The lessening wreck
Fired minute-guns, and signals of distress
From her deep-mouthed volcanoes ; but the sun,
Far underfoot, in sackcloth veiled his face,
And with his darkling train of planets fled.
Now were they left alone. The sky was hung
With black, through which all round the stars
shone red,
Like demons' eyeballs glaring on the scene.
But floods of light poured from the great white
throne,
And lit each face with glory or despair.

Pause we, for neither tongue nor pen can tell
The rapture or the horror of that hour.

And now a hush, deeper than that of death,
Fell on the countless millions gathered there.
Upon the Judge's left a guilty throng,—
Alas ! how many they,—waited their doom ;
But on His right hand more an hundred-fold,
With blissful eyes expectant, fixed on Christ,
Yet lips as silent as the emptied graves.
Once in eternity such silence is !
About the Judge, behind, above the throne,
Legions on legions were of angels bright.
The books were opened,—filled with sin and
shame

Of all the kindreds of our fallen race,
From Adam down to the last trumpet's peal.
Then an archangel brought the book of life.
Massive and fair, emblazoned with the cross,
And writ with names of all that loved the Lord.
The Judge smiled sweetly on its opening page ;
But ere He spake, a voice of man was heard,
Chanting in solemn and pathetic strain :—

“Thou, whom Thrones and Powers obey,
Trodest for me life's rugged way.
Save me by Thy cross and pain.”

'T was Vinton, standing there among the saved,
To his right mind restored, like one of old.
Then twice ten thousand saints took up the song :

“Seeking me Thy wearied feet
Fainted in the noontide heat.
Be thine anguish not in vain.”

And tears welled forth from out the sacred eyes,
That oft had wept on earth for sinful men.
He waved the hands, that once were pierced for
man,
Toward the ransomed, while His quivering lips
Essayed to speak the words, “No, not in vain !”
This said, the awful stillness came again
And rested on the Christ, on angels, and on men.

CANTO XI.

Space.

The Judgment over now, they take their way
The wicked down to hell to dwell with fiends ;
To the new Earth, the Christ with all His Saints,
And the good Angels, first-born sons of God,
Who as they journeyed, sang melodious praise.

HOLY ANGELS.

Almighty God, and heaven's eternal King,
Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost we sing.
Midway Thy presence evermore our flight,
Through dazzling splendors or through darkest
 night.

When we look backward to our morning's prime,
In thee, O God, we see our joy sublime ;
And, when we forward turn our hopeful gaze,
Thou art our all, our heaven, to endless days.
Thus sail we on upon a boundless sea,
Midway forever Thine eternity,
Lost in infinitude, and yet at home in Thee !

RAPHAËL.

Beautiful home of the ransomed Ones ; thou art
fairer than heaven,
Far away heaven, so long the abode of the Christ
and His angels.
Earth ! thy redemption is come ; thou hast cast
off thy fiery mantle.
Verdure, more lovely than ever, now smiles on
thy hilltops and valleys ;
Softer the mists that droop o'er thy lakes, or
cling to thy mountains ;
Softer the song of the Seas, where the wavelets
the sands are caressing.
Earth, thou art freed from the curse ; no grave
now thy surface disfigures ;
Gone are the pain and the weeping ; and hushed
is the cry of the mourner ;
Murder no more with his eager clutch is throttling
the helpless ;
Silenced the screams of the wounded, and silenced
the shouts of the victors.
Holiness everywhere shall reign in the hearts of
the Blessed ;
Peace of the Purified, bliss of the Glorified crown
thee forever.

Beautiful city of God, foretold by the garden of
Eden,

Sweet are thy groves and thy fountains, and
gentle the flow of thy river ;
Grandly thy domes of pearl and gold loom up
toward heaven,—
Height of calm, where the lifted gaze is lost in
the azure.
Here shall the Christ make His home, and God
and the Lamb be the temple,
Light and joy of the ransomed Ones, in the glory
eternal.

MICHAEL.

Sheathed is my sword, for the battle is o'er ; the
warfare accomplished.
Satan is vanquished again, his hosts are sunk in
Gehenna.
So be it, God of Right ; may Thy foes thus perish
for ever,
Angels or men that dare to upraise a hand 'gainst
Jehovah.

God of Eternity, tell us : Is conflict the law of
the ages ?
Peace for a time, then again, the buckler, the
sword, and the war-cry ?
And were it wrong to wish that my sword might
rust in its scabbard ?

Banners stay furled, and shields uphung on the
points of the lances?

This be my prayer, if such I should make, unto
Thee, O Eternal.

Will what Thou wilt ! I obey ; for Thy will is
righteous and holy.

Battle we on without end, if that be the edict of
Heaven.

Great is the Lord our God ; yea He is alone in
His greatness.

GABRIEL.

Half of Thy life had flown, O Lord our God, the
Eternal,

Ere we began to be ; or ere Thou createdst an
angel.

Moment supreme in the life-time of God, the
moment predestined.

While we stand there and peer back o'er Thy
limitless ocean of being,

Silence is on the Deep, a terrible silence and
darkness ;

Brink of our nothingness, infinite God, but the
marge of Thy fulness.

Out of that nothingness angels and archangels
flashed into being ;
Not like the lightnings that leap from the night-
cloud, and shine but a moment.
We are immortal ; we live while Thou livest, O
God, the Undying.
Silence eternal was broken with song, with the
voice of thanksgiving,
Choiring the praise of the Power that made us,
the Goodness that blessed us.
Simple Thy law for the angels : Love God and
love one another.

Bright as the sunsets of earth were the hours,—
as bright and as fleeting.
Soon came ambition and pride, the daring rebel-
lion of Satan.
Then too the law that had blest us before, now
dealt out its curses,
Teaching us Thou wouldst reveal Thyself in the
Good, by the Evil,—
Lesson amazing and darting a light to the heaven
of heavens,
Sin the meanwhile downcasting its shadow, so
baleful, to Tophet.

O the dense darkness till Michael drave out the
Dragon from heaven !
Then came the morning, the roseate morning,
that brightened to noonday.
Out of the Nothing came Man. O Man, thou
wonder of wonders !
Mystery fathomless ! Spirit and Matter distinct,
yet united ;
Giving thy life to thine offspring ; bound to them
all by a race-tie ;
Falling away from God, for thyself and for all
who came after ;
Bringing the curse of sin and of death, on all
generations
Knitted together like chain-mail,—an angel cannot
understand it.

Joined to the Godhead thrice holy ; the Sinless
made sin for the sinful,
Bearing their horrible guilt, and the pangs that
were due to transgression.
Rising, O Man, from thy grave, to live for ever and
ever,
Dwelling in yonder beautiful home with the
Christ in His Glory ;
Washed from thy sins in His blood,—thy weep-
ing forgot in the smiling ;

Whiter than snow thy heart, and fuller of joy
than an angel's.

Here as before we beheld the beauteous tints of
the sunset,

Followed, alas ! by the Night, yet with starlight
of promise and mercy ;

Followed in turn by the Morn, the Morn of the
brightness unending.

Marvellous God, is this the unchangeable law of
Thy dealings ?

Gloomings that vanish away, but Midnights and
Noondays abiding ?

Thus shall we learn what Thou art ? And thus
shall we fathom Jehovah ?

What can we know of Thee more ? And what can
remain for the future ?

Can there be wrath against sin, more just, O
God, or more fearful ?

Can there be love more divine, or pity more deep
and more tender ?

Spare us, O Infinite One ! O spare us ! we tremble
before Thee,—

Not from a fear of Thine anger, but from the
sight of Thy glory.

Rest we on Thee, for Thy gentle arms shall up-
hold us forever.

ALL HOLY ANGELS.

Evening and Morning are Thy Second day,
O Lord Most High ! Thy years shall never fail.

The Holy City.

They entered now the circumambient air,
That softly wrapped the earth with cloudless
blue.

Stars, that had glared so red upon the sight,
Turned silver-white and closed their eyes in
sleep.

'T was morn. The sunlight fell on battlements,
Next on the tops of lofty palaces,
On fountains throwing high their sheeny spray,
And stole its downward course to trees and
flowers,

Glistened along the streets of burnished gold,
And shimmered on the river's rippling wave.

Meanwhile a cohort of the heavenly host
With doubled speed entered the city first,
And stood with folded wings upon the wall
Above the gates, each gate a single pearl.
Toward the middle one upon the east,
Christ, His Apostles, Prophets, Martyrs came.
Before them went the vanguard of the host
Angelic, choiring in their mightiest notes :

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates ;
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors ;
And the King of glory shall come in.”

Then answered them the angels on the wall :

“Who is this King of Glory ? ”

To which a shout came back in thunder-tones :

“The Lord strong and mighty ;

The Lord mighty in battle.”

Again with voices jubilant they cried ;

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates ;

Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors ;

And the King of Glory shall come in.”

Then from the cohort :

“Who is this King of Glory ? ”

And now once more from angels and from saints,

With rapture greater than the bliss of heaven,

Because the Morning Stars together sang,

And all the Sons of God shouted for joy :

“The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.”

FINIS.

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